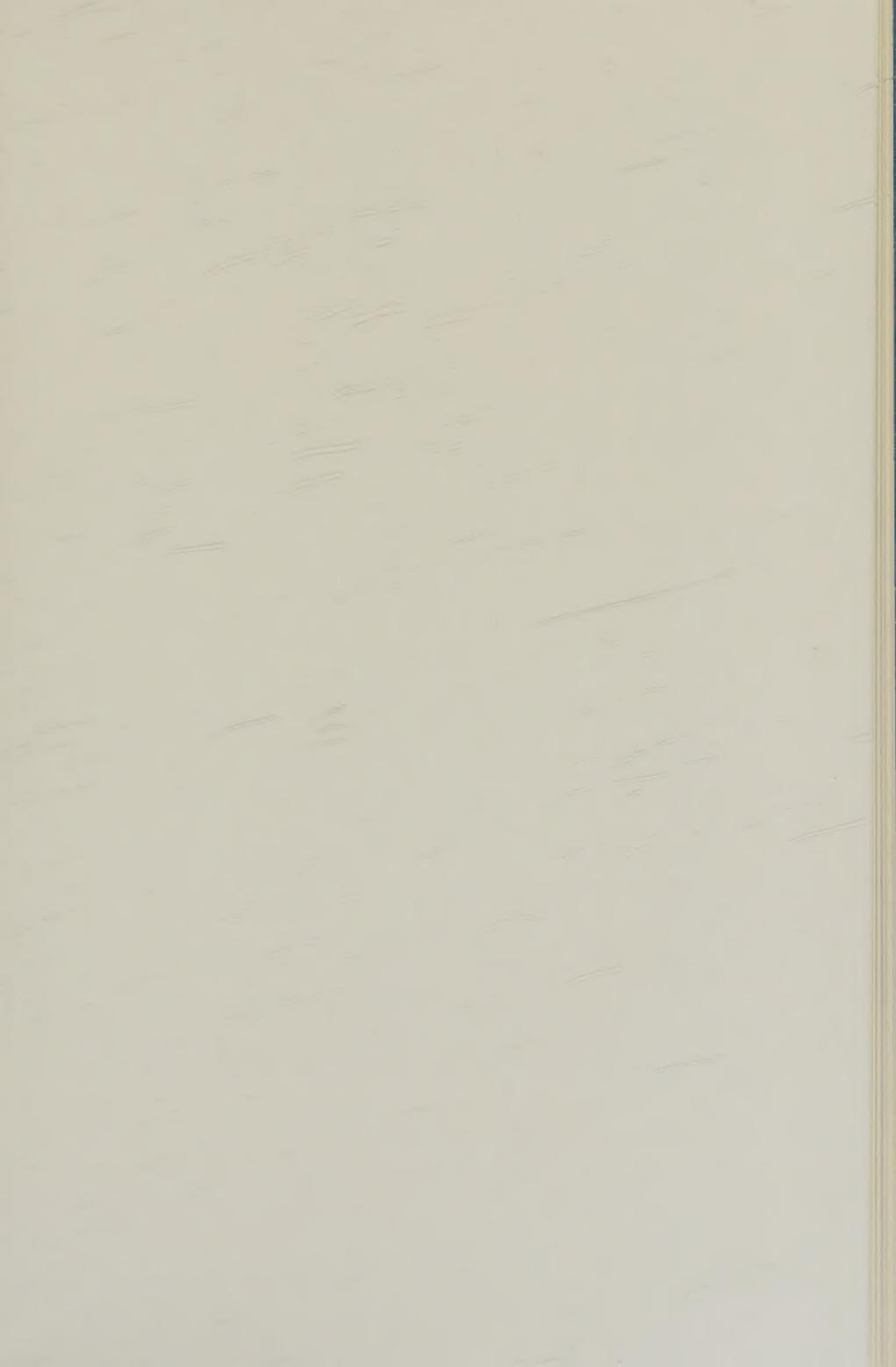




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Walter Oakeshott

*The Sword of
the Spirit*



*As for Rosemary, I let it run all over my
garden walls, not onlie because my bees
love it, but because it is the herb sacred to
remembrance and to friendship, whence
a sprig of it hath a dumb language.*

SIR THOMAS MORE

The Sword of the Spirit

*a meditative and
devotional anthology*

Winchester College

Edition

*First published in mcmli
by Faber and Faber Limited
24 Russell Square London W.C.1*

*This edition published in mcmxci
by The Friends of Winchester College*

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*Printed in Great Britain by
Smith Settle, Otley, West Yorkshire*

When the Greek writer Meleager made one of the first Anthologies, he called it a *garland of the poets*. Going through their names, he compared each with a flower or fruit: *the roses of Sappho, the sweet-scented iris of Nossis, the riotous grape cluster of Hegesippus*. Only one of his writers is represented in this garland, *the golden bough of the ever-divine Plato, that shines everywhere by its virtue*. But to this sheaf is added one herb that Meleager did not gather, rosemary; for this book, devised for your use, is given you in the hope that it may also sometimes remind you of the place where you heard some of these ideas first spoken.

W.F.O.

Forward to the Memorial Edition.

Following an approach from Walter Oakeshott's family, the Friends of Winchester College agreed to publish this memorial edition and to be responsible for selling and marketing it. For its part the family has assigned the copyright in the edition and any profits which may arise from publication to this Winchester College charity; and has provided a guarantee against the risk of loss.

Both the Friends of Winchester College and the family would like to express their thanks to John Thorn for contributing a personal memoir of the author. As a pupil of Walter Oakeshott at St. Pauls, and as one of his successors as Headmaster at Winchester, he is well qualified for the task.

Mr. Thorn's personal memoir apart, one brief item has been added to the anthology. It is the inscription to Sir Robert Shirley quoted by John Thorn at the end of his memoir.

Walter Oakeshott – a personal memoir by John Thorn

In 1981, twenty-seven years after he had ceased to be a headmaster, Walter Oakeshott opened – at my request – an exhibition of independent school art. He would not, I suppose, have been the obvious choice of most of my fellow headmasters. Few knew him. Some would not have heard of him. But in his short talk he disappointed none and moved us all.

“The best way to find what a work of art means,” he said, “is to have a line to follow that makes you look at it carefully again and again; not only general impressions but something that involves a closer look, bringing new questions to the mind week after week. . . . The simple point is important: the more we put into a work of art’s study, the more we get out of it.”

Nothing very original in that. Walter was describing the necessary method of any good art historian, the necessary method of any student of literature who wishes to do more than gulp the stuff down and see what happens. But he was telling us much about himself. He would sometimes quote a “great medieval thinker” who once said that the job of education was to confront the pupil with what first moves us with wonder and then leads him to curiosity. Such was the theme of Walter’s own life, as scholar and as teacher.

Greatness – in visual art, in literature, in music, and in science – never failed to move him with wonder; but never failed to make him curious. His approach to a painting or a text was meticulous. Without such concentrated and single-minded curiosity he would never have been able to distinguish one anonymous artist of the great Winchester Bible from another. He would make leaps of imagination and guesses, but his persistent examination of the minutiae of evidence showed him the best direction in which to leap. Shoddy scholarship was to him a form of moral turpitude. His sort of scholarship was the way of humility.

There was, in my wartime years at St. Paul's School, a rationalistic, iconoclastic, and remarkably influential teacher called Eynon Smith. Why he was not called up into the forces I do not know, for he had an iron constitution and apparent youth. But it was lucky for us he wasn't, for he was that rarity in the war years – a teacher of brilliance. Like many teachers of brilliance, however, he was arrogant, and dismissive of most of his colleagues. Unforgivably, he made clear to us his low opinion of most of them and his contempt for their traditionalist beliefs. But of one man I never heard him speak a word of criticism: the High Master, Walter Oakeshott. The High Master, it seemed, could do no wrong. Why this respect, from a man who gave it to so few?

Walter was not, I came to think, a great classroom

teacher. It was evident to those of us he from time to time taught that his knowledge was vast and unusually varied. We knew he was a considerable classical scholar, though many teachers at St. Paul's, even in the war, were that. But whereas many of his staff lived productively but safely in the world of their own disciplines, Walter roamed far and wide. He had worked, in the 1930s, among the unemployed of Merseyside and had written a book on Economics – *Commerce and Society* – now forgotten but then much read. He was already an expert on classical and medieval art. He was versed in the History of Science and could talk knowledgeably about Hipparchus, Grossetête, Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, Newton and Faraday. He seemed to know much of Shakespeare by heart and to have thought deeply about the moral issues of the tragedies. He took a course one term on Elizabethan seamen, about whose exploits he had also written a book as learned about cartography as about the practical problems of sixteenth century navigation. He would make memorable excursions into the novels of Virginia Woolf and the poems of Robert Browning. But, strangely, he did not – as perhaps he might have – hold us spellbound with all this at the time. What he said was memorable – so much so that I first sought out St. Praxed's Church in Rome, years later, because I still heard in my mind Walter's much imitated, quavering voice reading Browning's poem to us and giving us its background. But at the time it was

not riveting. His reading voice was a little monotonous, and it lacked – as at times we wrongly thought he did – emotional intensity. And there was in his lessons a lack of provocation, dispute and intellectual heat. We were feeding on a firstclass and richly stocked mind, the most richly stocked most of us were ever likely to encounter. But it was kept at a distance from us. There were no histrionics. Nothing of him was worn on the sleeve.

He was, I suspect, in front of a class, just plain shy; and a little nervous that with too much throwing about of ideas things might get out of hand. Had he been able to shed this shyness, then doubtless he would have excited us more at the time. But he did something which, in teaching, is much more important: he introduced us to things we would not otherwise have encountered at that impressionable time; and he made us remember them. The best lessons are not those from which one emerges excited, exhilarated, or moved. They are those whose content one recalls with excitement years after, perhaps half a century after. “Individuals have always been my interest”, he said to the Headmasters in 1981, referring to the artists of the Winchester Bible. Individuals – and detail, in a person, a painting, a poem. It is not surprising that the poet who contributes most pieces to *The Sword of the Spirit* should be Gerard Manley Hopkins.

I know little of Walter Oakeshott’s personal religious beliefs. When once I asked him to come and talk at

Winchester College, in the 1970s, he graciously said he would. “But I will not preach” – said with a smile, of course. But the smile had iron in it. He was one who had had preaching thrust upon him and he did not like it. Some of his Winchester sermons remain, in the Winchester archives. He sent them to me so that I would not badger him to add to them, perhaps. They are in small black notebooks, a page of his handwriting facing a page for emendations and additions. Reading his handwriting was obviously sometimes a problem for *him*, for over the more impenetrable squiggles will often be written a word in bold capitals. The manuscript is full of stress marks, pause marks, signs indicating variations of pace. The mechanics of delivery were as important as the content.

The sermons are longer than – sadly – might now be advisable in a school chapel, and much more full of learning and allusion than would now be common. The structure is impeccable, as is the thought’s organic growth from the indispensable biblical text. His favourite non-biblical passages – many of them here in this book – are frequently brought into play. Shakespeare is there in abundance, and Browning; T. S. Eliot, and Auden; the Abbot Suger and St. Benedict. A love of Winchester, Cathedral and College, shines through them. But there is no flight from social issues, particularly unemployment and the waste of human resources and creativity it brings. It is not easy to

discern from his sermons what his own politics were, upon whom he laid the blame for Merseyside unemployment in 1936, what he then felt its cure might be. Therapeutic social programmes interested him less than individual victims. But what would have been abundantly clear to his Wykehamist audience was that *their* place was with the defeated, that their example could somehow make the defeated victorious.

Like most British Christians working with the young, Walter was probably something of a Pelagian. He believed in the individual's responsibility for choice. More than once, the passage in Deuteronomy which forms the epigraph of Part IV of this anthology is quoted: "Therefore choose life." We cannot control the giving to us of our talents, but it is we and no one else who choose what we do with them. "It is not we, for instance, who decide whether we shall have five talents, or two talents; or one talent. But the point is that once the decision is made it is open to us to make other five". Seldom mentioned is the need in all this for the Grace of God. God, it seems, has done his work in making us as we are. The rest is up to us.

It is a headmasterly doctrine. It is optimistic and the best doctrine, probably, to put before youth. But absent from it is any consideration of the necessity for personal forgiveness or of the helplessness of men unvisited by God's Grace. The crucifixion is mentioned in the sermons, certainly, but more as an example of the

supremely sacrificial life than as an action upon which the whole Christian faith depends. It may be that Walter was as much moved by the death of Socrates, as recounted in Plato's *Phaedo* (page 176) as by the death of Jesus. Or is it that his silence is influenced by the school year? Schools are seldom in session upon Good Friday, and headmasters seldom preach upon it.

On the Resurrection, however, and its meaning in our lives, he was most eloquent. St. Luke's story of the walk to Emmaus is in this book. In a wonderful sermon on what the Resurrection meant to him personally he seizes on the words: "Was not our heart burning within us?" and uses them to describe the fire that, he felt, lit his own heart.

Walter's Christianity was, I believe, of that peculiar and wonderful kind, becoming rarer every year, that of Helleno-Christian humanism, the kind which traces a direct line through Plato, the neo-Platonists, John the Evangelist, Augustine, to George Herbert and Henry Vaughan. It is not showy or highly charged. It is quiet. It has never, even in its English home, captured the multitude. Its place is in Cathedrals and Colleges. Nowadays it is likely to be condemned – for being unenthusiastic, unsuited to the market place, too dependent on a love of ancient languages, and – oh dear! – too élitist. Its mood is caught in what *The Sword of the Spirit* contains, and in what it leaves out.

In 1983, I went over with some Winchester friends to

the celebration in Lincoln College of Walter's eightieth birthday. I remember only a little of the occasion, which was splendid; but I remember feeling a dismay, during the speeches, that those who rose to give their ex-Rector birthday wishes, were so lukewarm. For the first, and I hope last, time in my life I felt an urge to say something in public after dinner. I rose to my feet to tell the judicious dons that for some of us Walter Oakeshott, as well as being the fine, unselfish scholar they said he was and the adequate administrator they admitted he might be, was, for sixteen years, at two ancient schools, a great headmaster and an inspiration in our lives. Walter looked embarrassed and the dons unimpressed. I felt at once that I should have stayed silent and not let a misplaced filial piety, get the better of me.

Now, many years later, I do not know if I was right or not. I know what he meant to me, and can say some of that here: he made me feel it was good to read books intensively, to refuse to be confined to one's own original scholarly discipline, to look at works of art hard and questioningly, to be kind in leadership after the model of St. Benedict's abbot. But I do not know how he will stand in the history books still to be written about St. Paul's and Winchester. I do not think he could have liked that mysterious activity called "administration". I do not think he was an educational innovator – but then he was fortunate in working at a time when educational fashions followed one another more slowly

and decorously than they have since the mid-sixties. He was certainly not a strict disciplinarian – but at wartime St. Paul's disciplinary problems were few, and at Winchester after the war the prefects and their baronial housemasters still had such matters firmly, sometimes brutally, in hand and seldom had to worry the Headmaster with them. His strength lay in the great influence he had on the individuals lucky enough to get to know him, in both schools, outside the forum of the classroom. There are tales still told at Winchester of boys in the sanatorium, in the high fevers then still common, to whom he would devote many hours, chatting and reading aloud. Most Winchester housemasters then were far removed, in temperament and interests, from their gentle, bespectacled, slow-speaking head. They liked and respected him – who could fail to do that! But into the business of running their houses they did not let him much intrude. I guess that Walter's housemasters' meetings must often have been unequal struggles.

As for his time at St. Paul's, it may not be absurd to quote from an inscription to Sir Robert Shirley, in Staunton Harold Church, in Derbyshire. One of his wife's aunts had married into the same Shirley family; and that is how he came to know, and evidently grew fond of, the inscription. The church had been founded, in the year 1653, by Sir Robert, Baronet, "whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the

worst times and hoped them in the most callamitous". It is no bad summary of Walter Oakeshott's record in an evacuated and sometimes unavoidably chaotic St. Paul's in the Second World War. But Walter would be very cross with me for suggesting it.

Inscription to Sir Robert Shirley in
Staunton Harold Church

*In the yeare 1653
when all things sacred were throughout ye nation
either demolisht or profaned
Sir Robert Shirley, Barronet,
Founded this Church
Whose singular praise it is
to have done the best things in the worst times
and
hoped them in the most callamitous
The Righteous shall be held in everlasting
Remembrance.*

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Prologue

PROLOGUE

(i)

Enchiridion

Now it was on the feast of St. Martin that Alfred began —being one that had within him by nature the elements of godly thinking—to make his garland of the flowers of thought; gathered from many different places and learnt from many different masters, put together as there was room for them within the covers of a single book, which grew at length to about the length of a Psalter. This he used to call his 'Enchiridion' or handbook, and he used to keep it by him without fail day and night: and from it he used as he said to derive no little comfort.

ASSER

Life of Alfred the Great

(ii)

The open mind

I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of truth; as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblances of things (which is the chief point) and at the same time steady enough to fix and distinguish their subtler differences; as being gifted by nature with desire to seek, patience to doubt, fondness to meditate, slowness to assert, readiness to consider, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and as

PROLOGUE

being a man that neither affects what is new nor admits what is old, and that hates every kind of imposture. So I thought my nature had a kind of familiarity and relation with truth.

FRANCIS BACON, LORD VERULAM
De Interpretatione Naturae Prooemium

(iii)

Truth and value

★

In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be ever hearing, and never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

ST. PAUL
II Timothy iii, 1

★ ★

We make an idol of truth; for truth without charity is not God, but his image and idol, which we must neither love, nor worship.

PASCAL

★ ★ ★

God is never sought in vain, even when we do not find him.

ST. BERNARD

[16]

I

Change and Changelessness

*Though the ship be out among the billows,
yet it will remain sound and unbroken if the
cable holdeth.*

Alfred the Great

CHANGE AND CHANGELESSNESS

(iv)

Abide with us, for it is towards evening

O mortall folk, you may beholde and se
How I lye here, somtyme a myghty knyght.
The ende of Joye and all prosperite
Is dethe at last thorough his course and myght;
After the day there cometh the derké nyght,
For though the dayé be never so longe
At last the bells ryngeth to evensonge.

STEPHEN HAWES
Pastime of Pleasure

(v)

The flower fadeth

The voice said, Cry. And I said, What shall I cry? All flesh is as grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? All nations are before him as

nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Isaiah, xl

(vi)

The vanity of monuments

The iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the Pyramids? Herostratus lives that burnt the Temple of Diana, he is almost lost that built it; Time hath spared the Epitaph of Adrian's horse, confounded that of himself.

Oblivion is not to be hired: The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the Register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven Names make up the first story before the flood, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living Century. The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Aequinox? Every hour adds unto that current Arithmetic which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina of life, and even Pagans could doubt, whether thus to live, were to dye. Since our longest sunne sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darknesse, and have our

THIS TRANSITORY LIFE

light in ashes. Since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying memento's, and time that grows old in it self, bids us hope no long duration: Diurnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

Urne Buriall

(vii)

The flight of the sparrow

Coifi the pagan priest speaks to King Edwin, A.D. 627

The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant.

Bede

Ecclesiastical History

(viii)

Pessimism

Man, so far as natural science by itself is able to teach us, is no longer the final cause of the universe, the Heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science, indeed, as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings, famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved, after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past, and see that its history is of blood and tears, of helpless blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which has for the moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness which in this obscure corner has for a brief space broken the contended silence

ALL IS VANITY

of the universe will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. 'Imperishable monuments' and 'immortal deeds', death itself, and love stronger than death, will be as though they had never been. Nor will anything that *is* be better or worse for all that the labour, genius, devotion, and suffering of man have striven through countless generations to effect.

A. J. BALFOUR

The Foundations of Belief

(ix)

Like an insubstantial pageant

★

Why then doth flesh, a bubble-glass of breath,
Hunt after honour and advauncement vaine,
And reare a trophee for devouring death,
With so great labour and long lasting paine,
As if his daies for ever should remaine?
Sith all, that in this world is great or gaic,
Doth as a vapour vanish, and deacie.

Looke backe, who list, unto the former ages,
And call to count, what is of them become:
Where be those learned wits and antique sages,
Which of all wisedome knew the perfect somme?
Where those great warriors, which did overcome
The world with conquest of their might and maine,
And made one meare of th'earth and of their raine?

EDMUND SPENSER

The Ruines of Time



(*It does not seem to matter if later writers maintain that the sun will first become hotter and so scorch up life. The argument holds.*)

Not only is the amount of matter in the universe decreasing, but what is left continually spreads itself further and further apart. Because the sun is continually losing weight, the gravitational grip on the planets is for ever getting feebler, so that all the planets, including the earth, are continually moving further and further out from the sun into the icy cold of space. . . . Then beyond all we have the general expansion of the universe—the blowing-out of the soap-bubble so that the great star-cities themselves move ever further and further, away from one another. In some way the material universe appears to be passing away like a tale that is told—dissolving into nothingness like a vision. The human race, whose intelligence dates back only a single tick of the astronomical clock, could hardly hope to understand so soon what it all means. Some day perhaps we shall know; at present we can only wonder.

SIR JAMES JEANS
The Stars in their Courses

(x)

Terror

To me the vast emptiness of space, limitless, is terrifying—is appalling.

PASCAL

Reconciliation

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself in the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms—this knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness. . . . My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior Spirit, who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.

A. EINSTEIN

The eternal

Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.

Psalm cii, 25-27



I admire thee, master of the tides,
Of the Yore-flood, of the year's fall;
The recurb and the recovery of the gulf's sides,
The girth of it and the wharf of it and the wall;
Stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind;
Ground of being, and granite of it: past all
Grasp God, throned behind
Death, with a sovereignty that heeds but hides, bodes but
abides.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
The Wreck of the Deutschland

(xiii)

Cause and condition: mind and matter

Socrates awaiting the carrying out of the death sentence is considering the question of a first cause and the problem of materialistic determinism

I once heard a man (who was reading at the time a book written as he said by Anaxagoras) remarking that evidently it is mind which gives the universe its order and is 'the ultimate cause'. That idea excited me greatly. Such a cause was exactly what I wanted. There seemed to be a special appropriateness about mind being the universal cause, and I assumed that, if he was right in saying that mind was this cause, then it would work in the way that was best. I mean that if one wished to discover why anything begins to exist, continues to exist, or ceases to exist, it would be necessary only to find out

THE FIRST CAUSE

what was best for it. . . . As I thought over all this, I was delighted indeed. I thought I had found a man, in Anaxagoras, who could explain to me the cause of the universe in a way that was entirely in harmony with my own views. I thought that he would tell me whether the earth was flat or round, and having told me so much would go on to explain the compelling necessity of the fact, showing what was better, and that it was better for the earth to be of the nature that he described. If he placed it in the centre of the universe, he would show that that place was to be regarded as best for it; and once he convinced me that this or that was best, I was prepared to accept that as a final cause.

What was my disappointment to find, when I read, that he did nothing of the sort! Mind seemed to play no part in his account when I came to read it. He gave no causes in my sense of the word at all; but spoke of air or ether or water or other multifarious and strange things as causes. It was as if someone should say that Socrates' actions originated in his mind; and then, in attempting to explain any of my individual actions, should say that the reason why I now sit here, for instance, is that my body is made of bone and muscle, the bones being rigid and having cartilage in the joints, and muscle having as its property tension and relaxation, and surrounding the bones, as does also the flesh, and the skin which holds them all together; and the bones being movable in their sockets, that the tension or relaxation of the muscles makes me able to bend my limbs, and that that is the

cause why they are now bent and I am sitting here. He might equally go on to say that the cause of my talking to you was of the same character. He would speak of noise and of vibrations of air and in the ear, and mention innumerable 'causes' of that kind, and would be forgetting the cause which is in very truth a cause, which is that because my fellow citizens made up their minds to condemn me I decided it was best to abide here and that it was the right thing to accept their sentence; for these bones and muscles would doubtless have whisked themselves away long ago to Boeotia or Megara, acting on their own notion of what was best, if I had not reached the conclusion that a good man, and a just man, ought rather to accept his sentence than to take to his heels and run. To call such material things 'causes' seems to me quite extraordinary. If anyone should say that unless I had all this apparatus of bone and muscle and so forth, I could not carry out the purpose that I determined, that would be sound enough. But to say that *because* of all these things I do what I do, acting according to my intelligence in some way other than that of conscious choice of what is best, would be a very careless sort of argument. It would be failure to distinguish between two quite different things—the real cause for my action, and the conditions without which that action is not possible. This is what people are normally groping after when they talk of causes. They mean, not the causes, but the conditions of an action.

PLATO
Phaedo

*Whether there be knowledge, it shall be
done away*

The infinite distance which separates bodies from minds symbolizes the infinitely more infinite distance between minds and charity; for charity is supernatural.

All bodies, the firmament, the stars, earth and its kingdoms, are not worth the least of minds: for the mind knows all these things and itself; and bodies, nothing.

All bodies together, and all minds together, and all their productions, are not worth the least movement of charity. That belongs to an infinitely higher order.

Roll all the bodies in the world into one and you will not be able to get one little thought out of them. That is impossible, it belongs to another order. Similarly, from all bodies and minds you cannot draw a movement of true charity; for that too is impossible, that too belongs to another order, or supernatural order.

PASCAL

(xv)

Impavidum ferient ruinae

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright!
 The bridal of the earth and sky;
 The dew shall weep thy fall to-night:
 For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
 Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
 Thy root is ever in its grave,
 And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
 A box where sweets compacted lie;
 My music shows ye have your closes,
 And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
 Like season'd timber, never gives;
 But though the whole world turn to coal,
 Then chiefly lives.

GEORGE HERBERT
Virtue

II

The Divine Nature

I would have such knowledge about God, in my reason and in my understanding, that nothing could disturb me nor bring me into any doubt.

King Alfred

THE DIVINE NATURE

(xvi)

The divine power

(*The images of Shipwreck are in the poet's mind*)

Thou mastering me

God! giver of breath and bread;

World's strand, sway of the sea;

Lord of living and dead;

Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened me
flesh,

And after it almost unmade, what with dread,

Thy doing: and dost thou touch me afresh?

Over again I feel thy finger and find thee.

I did say yes

O at lightning and lashed rod;

Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess

Thy terror, O Christ, O God;

Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night:

The swoon of a heart that the sweep and the hurl of
thee trod

Hard down with a horror of height:

And the midriff astrain with leaning of, laced with fire
of stress.

The frown of his face

Before me, the hurtle of hell

Behind, where, where was a, where was a place?

I whirled out wings that spell

And fled with a fling of the heart to the heart of the
Host.

THE DIVINE POWER

My heart, but you were dovelwinged, I can tell,
Carrier-witted, I am bold to boast,
To flash from the flame to the flame then, tower from
the grace to the grace.

(xvii)

The abiding presence

1

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.
Thou understandest my thoughts afar off,
And art acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word in my tongue,
But thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.

THE ABIDING PRESENCE

Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Hell, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;
Even the night shall be light about me.
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee;
But the night shineth as the day:
The darkness and the light are both alike to thee.
Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm cxxxix, 1-12, 23, 24

★ ★

Lorde, Thou knowest that I must be very busie this day. If I forget Thee, yet do not Thou forget mee.

SIR JACOB ASTLEY
before Edgehill, 1642

The divine wisdom

We are compelled to start afresh. Our difficulties have all arisen from an initial assumption that everything in Nature, and waves of light in particular, admitted of a mechanical explanation: we tried in brief to treat the universe as a large machine. . . . If the universe is a universe of thought, then its creation must have been an act of thought. Indeed, the finiteness of time and space almost compel us, of themselves, to picture the creation as an act of thought.

SIR JAMES JEANS
The Mysterious Universe



And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Genesis i, 2



The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth;

WISDOM IN CREATION

While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight.

Proverbs viii, 22-30

* * * *

In the beginning was the mind of God, the divine reason, the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word, with God from the beginning, was God. All things were his creation. Without him was nothing. And that which was made in him was life, and this life was the light of men; and the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot understand it. This is the light that lights every man coming into the world.

And the Word became flesh, and lived among us, full of grace and truth. And we saw his glory—glory like the glory of the only Son of God.

St. John i

The divine beauty

Socrates is telling the words of the prophetess Diotima

The man who has learnt this much of love, that he can see what is beautiful in all its order and pattern, will at last reach the goal he is seeking, the goal which gives his labours their meaning. He will see something of a loveliness that is marvellous to behold; something that is eternal, which 'age cannot wither'; something which does not change, to become foul in one relationship though it is fair in another, fair here but foul there; something which does not wax or wane, fading one moment, increasing the next; something which is not merely beauty's ghost, like a face or hands or other bodily feature, or even some individual speech or some individual piece of knowledge; something which does not exist merely in some other being, in some living creature of earth or air or anything of the kind; but exists of itself, with itself, immutable. Everything that is beautiful partakes in some way of this divine beauty. But while they grow, decay, and die, such is its beauty that it changes not one whit.

To love truly is to be led up to catch a sight of this eternal beauty, and the man who is so led is approaching the true end of existence. True love means this. The association with earthly 'things that are lovely' is simply

AN IMMORTAL LOVELINESS

a beginning. From that beginning, a man may mount ever higher, for the sake of that eternal loveliness, mounting up as it were step by step. From the individual loveliness of one thing, he appreciates that of another, and so of more—eventually of all beautiful forms; and from beauty of form, he begins to see beauty of action, and then the beauty of the mind's ideas; and from this he reaches at last a conception of that idea which is the idea of loveliness itself; and this finally he learns to know as it is. In that moment a man's life becomes truly worth living, when he begins to contemplate this true and essential loveliness. If you ever see it, you will never place it in the same category as the 'things which moth and rust corrupt', the things which are to-day, and 'to-morrow are cast into the oven'. When you see such things now, you are smitten to the heart. You long perhaps to be with the object of your love; not necessarily even to eat or drink in their company, but if it were possible simply to be with them and gaze on them. Well then—what if a man should see loveliness itself, sheer, pure, unalloyed? What if he should catch a glimpse of loveliness, not clogged with mortality, with the colourful follies of everyday life, but the divine loveliness which is eternal? Do you think that the life of a man whose eyes were fixed on that, who contemplated and lived with that—do you think that the life of such a man could have anything cheap about it? Do you not see that that man alone will practise, not some imitation of virtue (since he is gazing not on imitations but on the true

AN IMMORTAL LOVELINESS

loveliness itself), but virtue which is real? And that as he engenders in others the reality of virtue and nurses it up and cherishes it in them, then at last he becomes the friend of God? Can a man put on immortality? If so, it is such a man as this.

PLATO
Symposium

* *

Vouchsafe then, O Thou most Almighty Spright!
From whom all guifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light
Of Thine eternall truth, that I may show
Some little beames to mortall eyes below
Of that immortall Beautie, there with Thee,
Which in my weake distraughted mynd I see;

That with the glorie of so goodly sight
The hearts of men, which fondly here admyre
Faire seeming shewes, and feed on vaine delight,
Transported with celestiall desyre
Of those faire formes, may lift themselves up hyer,
And learne to love, with zealous humble dewty,
Th' Eternall Fountaine of that heavenly Beauty.

EDMUND SPENSER
An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie

Dominus illuminatio

O merciful Jesus, enlighten Thou me with a clear shining inward light, and remove away all darkness from the habitation of my heart.

Command the winds and tempests; say unto the sea, Be still; say to the north wind, Blow not; and there shall be a great calm.

Send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth; for until Thou enlighten me, I am but as earth without form and void.

Join Thou me to Thyself with an inseparable band of love; for Thou even alone dost satisfy him that loveth Thee, and without Thee all things are vain and frivolous.

THOMAS À KEMPIS
Imitation of Christ

(xxi)

The divine anger

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous; and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

St. Matthew xxiii, 25-30, 33



Honour not the malice of thine enemy so much, as to say, thy misery comes from him: Dishonour not the

THE WRATH OF GOD

complexion of the times so much, as to say, thy misery comes from them; justify not the Deity of Fortune so much, as to say, thy misery comes from her; Find God pleased with thee, and thou hast a hook in the nostrils of every Leviathan, power cannot shake thee, Thou hast a wood to cast into the waters of Marah, the bitterness of the times cannot hurt thee, thou hast a Rock to dwell upon, and the dream of a Fortune's wheel cannot overturn thee. But if the Lord be angry, he needs no Trumpets to call in Armies, if he do but *sibilare muscam*, hiss and whisper for the fly, and the Bee, there is nothing so little in his hand, as cannot discomfit thee, discomfit thee, dissolve and pour out, attenuate and annihilate the very marrow of thy soul.

JOHN DONNE
from a Sermon

The divine justice

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market place, and said unto them: Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

And about the eleventh hour, he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them: Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him: Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them: Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, saying, These last

THE JUSTICE OF THE KINGDOM

have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said: Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?

St. Matthew xx, 1-15

The divine mercy



And early in the morning, he came again to the temple, and all the people came unto him, and he sat down, and taught them.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery, and when they had set her in the midst they say unto him: Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned. What sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.

But Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

And when they heard it, being convicted by their own conscience they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing there.

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more.

[*St. John*] viii, 2-11

THE DIVINE MERCY

* *

If I should inquire upon what occasion God elected me, and writ my name in the book of Life, I should sooner be afraid that it were not so, then finde a reason why it should be so. God made Sun and Moon to distinguish seasons, and day, and night, and we cannot have the fruits of the earth but in their seasons: But God hath made no decree to distinguish the seasons of his mercies. In paradise, the fruits were ripe, the first minute, and in heaven it is alwaies Autumne, his mercies are ever in their maturity. We ask *panem quotidianum*, our daily bread, and God never sayes you should have come yesterday, he never sayes you must againe to morrow, but *to day if you will heare his voice*, to day he will heare you. If some King of the earth have so large an extent of Dominion, in North, and South, as that he hath Winter and Summer together in his Dominions, so large an extent East and West, as that he hath day and night together in his Dominions, much more hath God mercy and judgement together: He brought light out of darkness, not out of a lesser light; he can bring thy Summer out of Winter, though thou have no Spring; though in the wayes of fortune, or understanding, or conscience, thou have been benighted till now, wintred and frozen, clouded and eclypsed, damped and benummed, smothered and stupified till now, now God comes to thee, not as in the dawning of the day, not as in the bud of the spring, but as the Sun at noon to illustrate all shadowes,

THE DIVINE MERCY

as the sheaves in harvest, to fill all penuries, all occasions
invite his mercies, and all times are his seasons.

JOHN DONNE
from a Sermon

The divine love

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
 Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
 If I lack'd anything.

'A guest', I answer'd, 'worthy to be here':
 Love said, 'You shall be he'.

'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
 I cannot look on Thee.'

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord; but I have marr'd them: let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.'

'And know you not', says Love, 'Who bore the blame?'
 'My dear, then I will serve.'

'You must sit down', says Love, 'and taste my meat.'
 So I did sit and eat.

GEORGE HERBERT

Love

★ ★

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him also, freely give us all things?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ST. PAUL
Epistle to the Romans viii

The end of the day

Blest be the God of love,
 Who gave me eyes, and light, and power this day,
 Both to be busy, and to play.
 But much more blest be God above,
 Who gave me sight alone,
 Which to Himself He did deny:
 For when He sees my ways, I die:
 But I have got His son, and He hath none.

What have I brought Thee home
 For this Thy love? Have I discharg'd the debt,
 Which this day's favour did beget?
 I ran; but all I brought, was foam.
 Thy diet, care, and cost
 Do end in bubbles, balls of wind;
 Of wind to Thee whom I have cross'd,
 But balls of wild-fire to my troubled mind.

Yet still Thou goest on,
 And now with darkness closest weary eyes,
 Saying to man, *It doth suffice;*
Henceforth repose; your work is done.
 Thus in Thy ebony box
 Thou dost enclose us, till the day
 Put our amendment in our way,
 And give new wheels to our disorder'd clocks.

THE DIVINE LOVE

I muse, which shows more love,
The day or night: that is the gale, this th'harbour;
That is the walk, and this the arbour;
Or that the garden, this the grove.

My God, Thou art all love.
Not one poor minute scapes Thy breast,
But brings a favour from above;
And in this love, more than in bed, I rest.

GEORGE HERBERT

Evensong

III

The Call

*Then Jesus turned and saw them following,
and saith to them, What seek ye?*

*They say unto him, Rabbi (which is being
interpreted, Master) where dwellest thou?
He saith unto them, Come and see.*

St. John i, 38

The call of the prophet

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

Isaiah vi, 1-8

The call of the scholar

In early childhood I remember being told that the existence of God is something which we know, but can-

not prove. In those days I saw nothing paradoxical in such an idea, and accepted it without a qualm. Later, I became aware of the traditional 'proofs of the existence of God', and noted them as intellectual curiosities, without feeling any strong personal interest in them. At the earliest time when my belief in God was anything more than a mere acquiescence in what I had been told, I believe it had a twofold root. On the one hand, the traditional proofs were loose in my mind, and I began to take them seriously. On the other hand, it is certain that for the greater part of the time the existence of God seemed to me to be just obvious. There came upon me at that time, what has never permanently left me since, a kind of metaphysical intuition or vision of God, which argument could neither shake nor confirm. It stood and was its own witness, and in comparison with it nothing else was real at all. It might come unheralded out of the blue, with no perceptible sensuous stimulus; or it might arise out of the contemplation of natural scenery or music, but always with the same compelling evidence. I used to express it in phraseology borrowed from all sorts of doctrines, Christian and non-Christian, theist and pantheist, but that did not mean that I had thought my way into those doctrines and there embraced them; it only meant that their language provided formulae in which my vision could be expressed. The fact that so many different formulae served this purpose shows either that the content of the vision wavered, or that none of the formulae was adequate to it. Perhaps both. The vision,

THE CALL OF THE SCHOLAR

occulted for a time by Greats, quickly reasserted itself, and stayed with me until, and after, the time when I embraced Christianity and was received into the Church. The study of philosophy had given me a still wider selection of formulae to play with; but now my acceptance of the obligations of Churchmanship produced a sense of responsibility in their use. . . .

PROFESSOR H. A. HODGES
from an unpublished paper

(xxviii)

The call of the seer

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand

THE CALL OF THE SEER

seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Revelation i, 10-18

The beginning of the quest

And then the king and all estates went home unto Camelot, and so went unto evensong to the great minster, and so after upon that to supper, and every knight sat in his own place as they were toforehand. Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive. So in the midst of this blast entered a sunbeam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighted of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other, by their seeming, fairer than ever they were before. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other as they had been dumb. Then entered into the hall the Holy Grail covered with white samite, but there was none that might see it, neither who that bare it. And when the Holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the Holy Vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became: then had they all breath to speak. And then the king yielded thankings to God, of His good grace that he had sent them. Certes, said the king, we ought to thank our Lord Jesu Christ greatly for that he hath shewed us this day, at the reverence of this high feast of Pentecost. Now, said Sir Gawaine, one thing beguiled

ANSWERING THE CALL

us, that we might not see the Holy Grail, it was so preciously covered. Wherefore I will make here a vow, that tomorn, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sangreal, and that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court again till I have seen it more openly than it hath been shewed here: and if I may not speed I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesu Christ. When they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawaine say so, they arose up the most part and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made. Alas, said King Arthur unto Sir Gawaine, ye have nigh slain me with the avow and promise that ye have made; for through you ye have bereft me the fairest fellowship and the truest of knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world; for when they depart from hence I am sure they all shall never meet more together in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it forthinketh not me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore, the departition of this fellowship. And therewith the tears fell in his eyes. And then he said: Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have set me in great sorrow, for I have great doubt that my true fellowship shall never meet here more again. Ah, said Sir Launcelot, comfort yourself, for it shall be unto us a great honour.

SIR THOMAS MALORY
Le Morte D'Arthur, Bk. XIII

PERSISTENCE

★ ★

There must be a beginning of any great matter, but the continuing unto the end until it be thoroughly finished yields the true glory.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

in a letter written after Cadiz, 17th May 1587

(xxx)

Commitment



If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Luke xi, 34



I read you those words of Mrs. Browning's about Art: how it requires the whole man, austere and unreservedly given; how great things must be done greatly, with a great purpose, a great heart, a great courage, a great energy, and a great persistent patience. The whole secret of life lies in these words. . . . When a young man starts on the life struggle, a helping hand can be held out. But this can rarely be done twice. After that first start, if he is ever to be of any good, and if the world is to be better because he lived, his own unaided effort must be the underlying cause.

Lord Esher to his son, 26th April 1907



The greatest things are accomplished, and the greatest achievements won, by toil and by striving uninterrupted, toil as well of the body as of the spirit.

Note by Richard Hakluyt the Elder, c. 1570

RELEASE FROM THE BURDEN

(xxxi)

Rest for the heavy laden



Now I saw in my dream, that the highway up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called Salvation. Up this way, therefore, did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back.

He ran thus till he came to a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and to continue to do, till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said, with a merry heart, 'He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death'. Then he stood still a while to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him, that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks. Now, as he stood looking and weeping, behold three shining ones came to him, and saluted him with 'Peace be to thee'; so the first said to him, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee'; the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed

RELEASE FROM THE BURDEN

him with a change of raiment; the third also set a mark on his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bade him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the Celestial Gate; so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing.

BUNYAN

The Pilgrim's Progress

★ ★

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Heaven-Haven

IV

The Choice of Life

See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.

Deuteronomy xxx, 15

The choice of life

Socrates describes the soul's choice of its destiny before its birth in man

'Your genius will not be allotted to you, but you will choose it; and let him who draws the first lot have the first choice, and the life which he chooses shall be his destiny. And so, though necessity stands behind all that happens, she has ordained that virtue is free, and as a man honours or dishonours her he will have more or less of her; the responsibility is with the chooser—God is justified. . . .'

And here, my dear Glaucon, is the supreme peril of our human state; and therefore the utmost care should be taken. Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge, and seek and follow one thing only, if perchance he may be able to learn and may find someone who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity. He should consider the bearing of all these things which have been mentioned, poverty and wealth, noble and humble birth, strength and weakness, cleverness and dullness, severally and collectively upon virtue; he will then look at the nature of the soul, and from the consideration of all these qualities he will be able to determine which is the better and which is the worse; and so he will choose, giving the name of evil to the life which will make his soul more unjust, and good to the life which will make his soul more just: all else he will disregard. For we have

THE CHOICE OF LIFE

seen and know that this is the best choice both in life and after death. A man must take with him into the next world an adamantine faith in truth and right, that there too he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil.

PLATO

Republic

(xxxiii)

Man's nature and the moral law

There is a universal moral law, as distinct from a moral code, which consists of certain statements of fact about the nature of man; and by behaving in conformity with which, man enjoys his true freedom. This is what the Christian Church calls 'the natural law'. The more closely the moral code agrees with the natural law, the more it makes for freedom in human behaviour; the more widely it departs from the natural law, the more it tends to enslave mankind and to produce the catastrophes called 'judgments of God'.

The universal moral *law* (or natural law of humanity) is discoverable, like any other law of nature, by experience. It cannot be promulgated, it can only be ascertained, because it is a question not of opinion but of fact. When it has been ascertained, a moral *code* can be drawn up to direct human behaviour and prevent men, as far as possible, from doing violence to their own nature. No code is necessary to control the behaviour of matter, since matter is apparently not tempted to contradict its own nature, but obeys the law of its being in perfect freedom. Man, however, does continually suffer this temptation and frequently yields to it. This contradiction within his own nature is peculiar to man, and is called by

the Church 'sinfulness'; other psychologists have other names for it.

DOROTHY SAYERS

The Mind of the Maker

(xxxiv)

Know thyself

To know ourselves is the foundation of all life that develops beyond the merely physical level of experience. Unless consciousness does its work successfully, the facts which it offers to intellect, the only things upon which intellect can build its fabric of thought, are false from the beginning. A truthful consciousness gives intellect a firm foundation upon which to build; a corrupt consciousness forces intellect to build on a quicksand. The falsehoods which an untruthful consciousness imposes on the intellect are falsehoods which intellect can never correct for itself. In so far as consciousness is corrupted, the very walls of truth are poisoned. Intellect can build nothing firm. Moral ideals are castles in the air. Political and economic systems are mere cobwebs. Even common sanity and bodily health are no longer secure. . . .

Just as the life of a community depends for its very existence on honest dealing between man and man, the guardianship of this honesty being vested not in any one

KNOW THYSELF

class or section, but in all and sundry, so the effort towards expression of emotions, the effort to overcome corruption of consciousness, is an effort that has to be made not by socialists only but by everyone who uses language, whenever he uses it. Every utterance and every gesture that each one of us makes is a work of art. It is important to each one of us that in making them, however much he deceives others, he should not deceive himself. If he deceives himself in this matter, he has sown in himself a seed which, unless he roots it up again, may grow into any kind of wickedness, any kind of mental disease, any kind of stupidity and folly and insanity. . . . The corrupt consciousness is the true *radix malorum*.

PROFESSOR H. A. HODGES
from an unpublished paper

(xxxv)

The Way, the Truth, the Life



Follow thou Me: 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Without the Way, there is no going; without the Truth, there is no knowing; without the Life, there is no living. I am the Way, which thou oughtest to follow; the Truth, which thou oughtest to trust; the Life, which thou oughtest to hope for.

I am the inviolable Way, the infallible Truth, the endless Life.

I am the straightest Way, the supreme Truth, the true, the blessed, the uncreated Life.

If thou remain in My way, thou shalt know the Truth, and the Truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on eternal Life.

THOMAS À KEMPIS
Imitation of Christ



Thou art my life; if thou but turn away
My life's a thousand deaths: thou art my way;
Without thee, Lord, I travel not, but stray.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

My light thou art; without thy glorious sight
My eyes are darkened with perpetual night:
My God, thou art my way, my life, my light.

Thou art my way; I wander, if thou fly:
Thou art my light; if hid, how blind am I!
Thou art my life; if thou withdraw, I die.

Disclose thy sunbeams; close thy wings and stay;
See, see how I am blind, and dead, and stray,
O thou that art my light, my life, my way!

FRANCIS QUARLES

Why dost Tha shade Thy lovely face

(xxxvi)

The light of the world



Ye are the light of the world.

A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let *your* light so shine before men; that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

St. Matthew v, 14-16



Othello speaks of the candle, and of the light of Desdemona's life

Put out the light and then put out the light.
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me. But once put out thy light
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling Nature
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume.

SHAKESPEARE
Othello

(xxxvii)

The choice of wisdom

*

In Gibeon the Lord appeared unto Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee: and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant King instead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge these thy so great a people?

And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee an under-

THE CHOICE OF WISDOM

standing heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

And Solomon awoke; and behold, it was a dream.

I Kings iii

* *

I can teach thee other parables about Wisdom. Consider now when men seek the king's home where he is in town, or his court, or his army, whether it seemeth to thee that they all must come thither by the same road; on the contrary, I suppose they would come by very many roads: some would come from afar, and would have a road very long and very bad and very difficult; some would have a very long and very direct and very good road; some would have a very short and yet hard and strait and foul one; some would have a short and smooth and good one; and yet they all would come to one and the same lord. . . . So is it likewise with Wisdom. Each one who wisheth it and who anxiously prayeth for it, he can come to it and abide in its household and live near it; yet some are nearer it, others farther from it; just so is every king's court: some dwell in cottages, some in halls, some on the threshing-floor, some in prison; and yet they all live by the favour of one lord, just as all men live under one sun, and by its light see what they see.

KING ALFRED THE GREAT

(xxxviii)

Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars

The times are nightfall, look, their light grows less;
The times are winter, watch, a world undone:
They waste, they wither worse; they as they run
Or bring more or more blazon man's distress.
And I not help. Nor word now of success:
All is from wreck, here, there, to rescue one—
Work which to see scarce so much as begun
Makes welcome death, does dear forgetfulness.

Or what is else? There is your world within.
There rid the dragons, root out there the sin.
Your will is law in that small commonweal. . . .

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

a fragment

(xxxix)

Good and evil: the warrior soul

★

Be thou therefore ready for the conflict, if thou wilt
have the victory.

Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the
crown of patience.

THE WARRIOR SOUL

Without labour there is no rest; nor without fighting can there be victory.

THOMAS À KEMPIS

Imitation of Christ

★ ★

He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure.

MILTON

Areopagitica

★ ★ ★

Then said Christian, you make me afraid. But whither shall I fly to be safe? If I go back to mine own country, that is prepared for Fire and Brimstone, and I shall certainly perish there. If I can get to the Celestial City, I am

THE WARRIOR SOUL

sure I will be in safety there. I must venture. To go forward, is Fear of death and Life everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward. So Mistrust and Timorous ran down the hill, and Christian went on his way.

BUNYAN

Pilgrim's Progress

(xl)

Adventure



The definition of culture as the knowledge of the best that has been said and done, is so dangerous by reason of its omission. It omits the great fact that in their day the great achievements of the past were the adventures of the past. Only the adventurous can understand the adventures of the past. A race preserves its vigour so long as it is nerved by the vigour to adventure beyond the safeties of the past. Without adventure civilization is in full decay.

A. N. WHITEHEAD
Adventures of Ideas



No one can be a great thinker who does not recognize that it is his duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead.

J. S. MILL

The restless seeker

When God at first made man,
 Having a glass of blessings standing by;
 Let us (said He) pour on him all we can:
 Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
 Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way,
 Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honour, pleasure;
 When almost all was out, God made a stay,
 Perceiving that alone of all His treasure
 Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
 Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
 He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
 And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
 So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
 But keep them with repining restlessness:
 Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
 If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
 May toss him to My breast.

GEORGE HERBERT
The Pulley

The lust of the eyes

King Arthur has been wounded to the death at the battle of Barham Down

Alas, said the king, this is to me a full heavy sight, to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me, that had more need of help than I. Alas, that he would not complain him, for his heart was so set to help me: now Jesu have mercy upon his soul! Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me, for wit thou well an I might live myself, the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur unto Sir Bedivere, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again. So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, and the pom-mel and the haft was all of precious stones; and then he said to himself: If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And so, as soon as he might, he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword in the water. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said,

I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king, therefore go thou lightly again, and do my commandment; as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand; and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waters wappe and waves wanne. Ah, traitor untrue, said King Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would ween that thou that hast been to me so lief and dear? and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the richness of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do not as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands: for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead. Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and so he went to the water side; and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water, as he might; and there came an arm and an hand above the water and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over

long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hoved a little barge with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king. And so he did softly: and there received him three queens with great mourning; and so they set them down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head. And then that queen said: Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? alas, this wound on your head hath caught overmuch cold. And anon they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried: Ah my lord Arthur, what shall become of me, now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies? Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in; for I will into the vale of Avilion to heal me of my grievous wound: and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul.

SIR THOMAS MALORY

Le Morte D'Arthur, Bk. XXI

(xlivi)

Treasure in heaven

And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one unto him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good

TREASURE IN HEAVEN

Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour thy father and thy mother. And he said unto him, Master, all these things have I observed from my youth.

And Jesus looking upon him, loved him, and said unto him, one thing thou lackest; go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful; for he was one that had great possessions.

St. Mark x

Unsatisfied

Lord! What a busy, restless thing
Hast thou made man!
Each day and hour he is on wing,
Rests not a span;
Then having lost the Sun and light,
By clouds surpriz'd,
He keeps a commerce in the night
With air disguis'd.
Hadst Thou given to this active dust
A state untir'd,
The lost son had not left the husk
Nor home desir'd;
That was Thy secret, and it is
Thy mercy too,
For when all fails to bring to bliss,
Then, this must do.
Ah! Lord! And what a purchase will that be
To take us sick, that sound would not take Thee!

HENRY VAUGHAN

The Pursuit

COURAGE

(xlv)

Let us not stain our honour

Now Judas had pitched his tents at Eleasa, and three thousand chosen men with him: Who seeing the multitude of the other army to be so great were sore afraid; whereupon many conveyed themselves out of the host, insomuch as there abode of them no more but eight hundred men. When Judas therefore saw that his host slipt away, and that the battle pressed upon him, he was sore troubled in mind, and much distressed, for that he had no time to gather them together. Nevertheless unto them that remained he said, Let us arise and go up against our enemies, if peradventure we may be able to fight with them. But they entreated him, saying, We shall never be able: let us now rather save our lives, and hereafter we will return with our brethren, and fight against them: for we are but few. Then Judas said, God forbid that I should do this thing, and flee away from them: if our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our honour.

I *Maccabees ix, 5-10*

(xlvi)

Spirit triumphant

★

Sir Humfrey Gilbert's last voyage

Leaving the issue of this good hope unto God, who

knoweth the trueth only, and can at his good pleasure bring the fame to light: I will hasten to the end of this tragedie, which must be knit up in the person of our Generall. And as it was Gods ordinance upon him, even to the vehement perswasion and intreatie of his friends could nothing availe, to divert him from a wilfull resolution of going through in his Frigat, which was overcharged upon their deckes, with fights, nettings, and small artillerie, too cumbersome for so small a boate, that was to passe through the Ocean sea at that season of the yere, when by course we might expect much storme of foule weather, whereof indeed we had enough.

But when he was intreated by the Captaine, Master, and other his well willers of the Hinde, not to venture in the Frigat, this was his answere: I will not forsake my little company going homeward, with whom I have passed so many stormes, and perils. And in very trueth, hee was urged to be so over hard, by hard reports given of him, that he was afraid of the sea, albeit this was rather rashnes, then advised resolution, to preferre the wind of a vaine report to the weight of his owne life.

Seeing he would not bend to reason, he had provision out of the Hinde, such as was wanting aboard his Frigat. And so we committed him to Gods protection, and set him aboard his Pinnesse, we being more than 300 leagues onward of our way home.

By that time we had brought the Islands of Açores South of us, yet wee then keeping much to the North, until we had got into the height and elevation of Eng-

land: we met with very foule weather, and terrible seas, breaking short and high pyramid wise. The reason whereof seemed to proceede either of hilly grounds high and low within the sea, (as we see hilles and dales upon the land) upon which the seas doe mount and fall: or else the cause proceedeth of diversitie of winds, shifting often in sundry points; al which having power to move the great ocean, which againe is not presently sealed, so many seas do encounter together, as there had bene diversitie of windes. Howsoever it commeth to passe, men which all their life time had occupied the Sea, never saw more outragious seas. We had also upon our maine yard, an apparition of a little fire by night, which sea-men doe call Castor and Pollux. But we had onely one, which they take an evill signe of more tempest: the same is usuall in stormes.

Munday the ninth of September, in the afternoone, the Frigat was neere cast away, oppressed by waves, yet at that time recovered: and giving foorth signes of joy, the Generall sitting abaft with a booke in his hand, cried out unto us in the Hind (so oft as we did approach within hearing) **WE ARE AS NEERE TO HEAVEN BY SEA AS BY LAND.** Reiterating the same speech, well beseeming a souldier, resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testifie he was.

The same Monday night, about twelve of the clocke, or not long after, the Frigat being ahead of us the Golden Hinde, suddenly her lights were out, whereof as it were in a moment, we lost the sight, and withall our watch

SPIRIT TRIUMPHANT

cryed, the Generall was cast away, which was too true. For in that moment, the Frigat was devoured and swallowed up of the Sea. Yet still we looked out all that night, and ever after, untill wee arrived upon the coast of England: Omitting no small saile at sea, unto which we gave not the tokens betweene us agreed upon, to have perfect knowledge of each other, if we should at any time be separated.

In great torment of weather, and perill of drowning, it pleased God to send safe home the Golden Hinde, which arrived in Falmouth, the 22 day of September, being Sonday, not without as great danger escaped in a flaw, comming from the Southeast, with such thicke mist, that we could not discerne land, to put in right with the Haven.

HAKLUYT

*A report of the Voyage of Sir Humfrey
Gilbert, Knight, attempted in 1583*

★ ★

I have been very near the gates of death, and have returned very weak, and an old man, feeble and tottering, but not in spirit and life, not in the real man, the imagination which liveth for ever. In that I grow stronger and stronger as this foolish body decays.

WILLIAM BLAKE

SPIRIT TRIUMPHANT

★ ★ ★

The writer is describing what happened to the column led by him in the fighting in the Burma jungle.

What to do with the wounded? The problem we had all so long dreaded had at last arisen. There were five of them unfit to move, and by bad luck they included not only John but his platoon sergeant and two of his section commanders: they had all been together at the fatal moment. The truck had got away, and there was no knowing when the Japs would come back on us. We hoisted three of them on to mules, and bore them down to the village a hundred yards away; and there we left them with their packs, and earthen jugs of water, in the shade under one of the houses. One of them said, "Thank God, no more walking for a bit"; one, Corporal Dale, said, "See and make a good job of that bridge"; and John Kerr said, "Don't you worry about us, sir, we'll be all right."

BERNARD FERGUSSON

Beyond the Chindwin

(xlvii)

The virtuous heathen

Is that heathen saint doomed for eternity?

Meanwhile Epicurus lies deep in Dante's hell, wherein we meet with Tombs enclosing souls which denied their immortalities. But whether the virtuous heathen, who lived better than he spake, or erring in the principles of himself, yet lived above Philosophers of more specious Maximes, lye so deep as he is placed; at least so low as not to rise against Christians, who beleeving or knowing that truth, have lastingly denied it in their practise and conversation, were a quaery too sad to insist on.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

Urne Buriall

(xlviii)

The friend and the traitor

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy: and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into

temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him. And they laid their hands on him, and took him. And his disciples forsook him, and fled.

And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

And there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither

understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch: and the cock crew.

And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

St. Mark xiv

(xlix)

Repentance

At the round earth's imagin'd corners blow
 Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
 From death, you numberless infinities
 Of souls, and to your scatter'd bodies go;
 All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
 All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
 Despair, law, chance, hath slain, and you whose eyes
 Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.

REPENTANCE

But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space;
For if, above all these, my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace,
When we are there; here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
As if Thou hadest seal'd my pardon with Thy blood.

JOHN DONNE
Holy Sonnet VII

(1)

Leadership

★

An Abbot who is worthy of his position will always be mindful of the title he bears, and will not belie, by what he does, a name that belongs to a greater than himself. For his is the duty of representing Christ himself in the brotherhood, seeing that he is called by God's title, in the words of the apostle *Ye received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

And so the Abbot must neither teach, nor enjoin, nor order anything contrary to the commandments of the Lord—God forbid; and he must never forget that both for his teaching and its effects on those he teaches will he be called into question in the last fearful judgment of God Himself. He must know that whatever the master finds amiss with the sheep is counted to the blame of the shepherd; though again, if the shepherd has striven with all diligence though his flock be still restless and disobedient, and if he has always cared for them without ceasing for all their perversities, then at the judgment seat of God may the shepherd find forgiveness, and say with the Prophet: *Thy justice I have not hidden away in my heart. I spoke aloud the work of Thy truth and Thy salvation. But they have despised me and spurned me.*

And therefore the Abbot must needs show the right way to his disciples by teaching which is twofold. He must show them, by what he does even more than by

what he says, what is good and holy. For those who can understand it, he must preach the word of God, but for those whose hearts are hard and whose skulls are thick he must show the commandments of God by his own actions. For, by his own actions, he shows that those things must not be done which he has taught his disciples to be contrary to the will of God; or else he will be convicted himself of the offences against which he preaches to others, and in his sins God will say *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, and that thou hast taken my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee; and thou who wilt see the speck in thy brother's eye, the plank in thine own hast thou not seen.*

Let there be no distinction of persons made by the Abbot in his monastery. Let not one be loved more than another, save only perchance that man whom the abbot has found better, in good deeds or in his obedience; let not the freeborn be preferred above him who was born a slave, unless there be some cause in reason for it. Let the Abbot's affection be equal for all, and, to all alike, let him give what is due for their teaching.

For in his teaching the abbot must have regard ever to that saying of the apostle when he says: *Reprove, rebuke, exhort.* Let him show both the stern affection of a master, and the dear love of a father. He must reprove as sternly as may be those who lack restraint or who make disturbance. But the meek, obedient and gentle he must exhort to further good works. Yet he must not fail in

rebuke and correction of the careless and the arrogant. He must not overlook offences committed, but straightway, at the start, do away with them utterly so that they never show themselves again. He should remember what befell Eli, the priest of the Lord in Shiloh. Those whose goodness is more to be trusted, he will more than once chastise, if chastisement is needed, with his tongue; but the insolent, the obstinate, the arrogant or disobedient he will keep in check with the lash of bodily punishment at the very onset of their sin, remembering how it is written: *The fool is not ruled by words*, and again, *Beat thy son with a rod, and thou wilt free his soul from death*.

The abbot must be mindful of what he is, and be mindful of what he is called; and he must know that from him, to whom most is given, is most reckoned to be due. He must know how hard and exacting a task it is, to rule the spirits of others and to serve the dispositions of many different men, one by fair words, another by reproof, another by persuasion. According to the character or the intelligence of each, he must fit himself to each, and be all things to all men. He must not complain for lack of this world's goods, but remember what is written *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all else shall be added unto you*, and again, *They that fear him lack nothing*. And as he is mindful that others must be called to account, let the account that he must himself needs give be ever in his mind; and as he corrects others who are within his jurisdiction, let him be himself free from fault.

When there is any great matter to be done, then let the Abbot summon together all the brethren, and let him speak out first upon it himself. And let him listen to the counsel of the brethren and then do what he judges to be best. But all the brethren should be taken into his counsel, for oftentimes it is to the least of the brethren that God reveals the counsel that is best.

Let him remember when he is appointed what is the task that he has undertaken. Let him remember that his part is not to be master, but to serve. And in the correction of others let him deal prudently and without excess, lest while he endeavour overmuch to clean away the spot, the whole vessel be broken. Let him remember that to shatter it is easy. Let him be mindful that *the bruised reed must not be broken*. I say not that he should suffer faults to grow; but let him do away with them in all prudence and in all charity, as he sees that it is best for each one; and let his desire be to win affection, not to win fear. Let him not be impulsive, nor over-anxious. Let there be no excess in punishment, nor hardness of heart. Let him not be jealous, nor too suspicious, but of even temper. When he bids a man do this or that, let him look to its results, and look to the welfare of him who is bidden. Let him be discerning and moderate, and remember how Jacob was discerning and said *If they overdrive the flocks in one day, they will die*.

*Rule of St. Benedict, parts of
Chs. II, III, LXIV*



And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

St. Mark x, 32-45



It is almost a truism to say that he who would control others must control himself. He must have a quieter and more impartial mind than those whom he would restore. He must not either command or reprove until he is fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. He must convey the impression that he will listen to the voice of reason only, and not be moved by entreaties, that he remembers and does not forget, and that he observes more than he says. He must know the characters of those with whom he deals; he must show that he has a regard for their feelings when he is correcting or reproofing them. The great art is to mingle authority with kindness; there are a few, but a very few, who by some happy tact have contrived so to rebuke another as to make him their friend for life.

Thus in the exercise of authority there must be a basis of kindness and good-will, but many other qualities are also required in those who would influence or control others. Perhaps there must be a degree of reserve, for the world is governed, not by many words, but by few; and nothing is more inconsistent with the real exercise of power than rash and inconsiderate talking. We are not right in communicating to others every chance thought that may arise in our minds about ourselves or about them. There is a noble reserve which prevents us from intruding on the feelings of others, and sometimes refrain from asking for their sympathy or

approbation. Dignity and self-respect are the natural accompaniments of authority, and the essence of dignity is simplicity. We must banish the thought of self, how we look, what effect we produce, what is the opinion of others about our sayings and doings; these only paralyse us at the time of action. We want to be, and not to seem, to think only of the duty which we have in hand, to be indifferent to the world around. We want to see things in their proper proportions; not to be fidgety or uneasy about trifles, not to be greatly disturbed about any of those evils which lightly pass away and are cured by time.

BENJAMIN JOWETT
From a sermon

(li)

Popularity

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day!

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, 'Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies!'
They had answered, 'And afterward, what else?'

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
 To give it my loving friends to keep!
 Nought man could do, have I left undone:
 And you see my harvest, what I reap
 This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
 Just a palsied few at the windows set;
 For the best of the sight is, all allow,
 At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
 By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
 For they fling, whoever has a mind,
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
 In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
 'Paid by the World,—what dost thou owe
 Me?' God might question: now instead,
 'Tis God shall repay! I am safer so.

ROBERT BROWNING
The Patriot

(lii)

*Fame**The poet strives for a fame that is immortal*

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
 (That last infirmity of Noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious dayes;
 But the fair Guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes the blind fury with th'abhorred shears,
 And slits the thin spun life. But not the praise,
 Phoebus repli'd, and touch'd my trembling ears;
 Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistering foil
 Set off to th'world, nor in broad rumour lies,
 But lives and spreds aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witnes of all judging Jove;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

JOHN MILTON

Lycidas

(liii)

Damnable pride

The one kind of pride which is wholly damnable is the pride of the man who has something to be proud of. The pride which, proportionately speaking, does not

PRIDE

hurt the character, is the pride in things which reflect no credit on the person at all. Thus it does a man no harm to be proud of his country, and comparatively little harm to be proud of his remote ancestors. It does him more harm to be proud of having made money, because in that he has a little more reason for pride. It does him more harm still to be proud of what is nobler than money—intellect. And it does him most harm of all to value himself for the most valuable thing on earth—goodness.

G. K. CHESTERTON

Heretics

(liv)

The world in the eye of eternity

I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great *Ring* of pure and endless light,
 All calm, as it was bright,
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
 Driv'n by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow mov'd in which the world
 And all her train were hurl'd;
The doting lover in his quaintest strain
 Did there complain,
Near him his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
 Wit's sour delights,
With gloves, and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,
 Yet his dear treasure
All scatter'd lay, while he his eyes did pour
 Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman hung with weights and woe
Like a thick midnight-fog mov'd there so slow
 He did nor stay, nor go;
Condemning thoughts, (like sad eclipses) scowl
 Upon his soul,
And clouds of crying witnesses without
 Pursued him with one shout.
Yet digg'd the mole and, lest his ways be found,
 Work'd underground,

GLITTERING PRIZES

Where he did clutch his prey, but one did see
That policy;
Churches and altars fed him, perjuries
Were gnats and flies,
It rain'd about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sat pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself
And hugg'd each one his pelf,
The downright Epicure plac'd Heav'n in sense
And scorned pretence,
While others, slipp'd into a wide excess,
Said little less;
The weaker sort, slight trivial wares enslave,
Who think them brave,
And poor, despised Truth sat counting by
Their victory.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing, and weep, soar'd up into the *Ring*,
But most would use no wing.
O fools (said I) thus to prefer dark night
Before true light,

THE CHOICE OF LIFE

To live in grots, and caves, and hate the day
Because it shews the way,
The way which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God,
A way where you might tread the Sun, and be
More bright than he.
But as I did their madness so discuss
One whisper'd thus:
*This Ring the Bridegroom did for none provide
But for His bride.*

HENRY VAUGHAN
The World

(lv)

The rebel heart

I struck the board, and cried, No more.

I will abroad.

What? Shall I ever sigh and pine?

My lines and life are free; free as the road,

Loose as the wind, as large as store.

Shall I be still in suit?

Have I no harvest but a thorn

To let me blood, and not restore

What I have lost with cordial fruit?

Sure there was wine

Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn

Before my tears did drown it.

Is the year only lost to me?

Have I no bays to crown it?

No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?

All wasted?

Not so, my heart: but there is fruit,

And thou hast hands.

Recover all thy sigh-blown age

On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute

Of what is fit, and not. Forsake thy cage,

Thy rope of sands,

Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee

Good cable, to enforce and draw,

And be thy law,

THE REBEL HEART

While thou didst wink and would'st not see.

Away! take heed:

I will abroad.

Call in thy death's head there: tie up thy fears.

He that forbears

To suit and serve his need,

Deserves his load.

But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wild

At every word,

Methought I heard one calling, *Child!*

And I repli'd, *My Lord.*

GEORGE HERBERT

The Collar

(lvi)

*Beyond repentance**Faustus speaks as the hour of damnation approaches*

Ah, Faustus,
 Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
 And then thou must be damned perpetually!
 Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of Heaven,
 That time may cease, and midnight never come;
 Fair Nature's eye rise, rise again and make
 Perpetual day; or let this hour be but
 A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
 That Faustus may repent and save his soul!
O lente, lente, currite noctis equi!
 The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
 The Devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.
 O, I'll leap up to my God! Who pulls me down?
 See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
 One drop would save my soul—half a drop: ah, my
 Christ!
 Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
 Yet will I call on him: O spare me, Lucifer!—
 Where is it now? 'tis gone; and see where God
 Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
 Mountain and hills come, come and fall on me,
 And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!

MARLOWE
Dr. Faustus

(lvii)

And it was night

When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in the spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray me. The disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoneth to him and saith unto him, Tell us who it is of whom he speaketh. He leaning back, as he was, on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus therefore answereth, He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him. So when he had dipped the sop, he taketh it and giveth it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. And after the sop, there entered Satan into him. Jesus therefore saith unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake thus unto him. He then having received the sop went out straightway. And it was night.

St. John xiii

(lviii)

Humility

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

St. Luke xviii, 9-14

(lix)

Manger and throne

As Joseph was a walking,
 He heard an angel sing:
 'This night shall be born
 Our heavenly king.

[114]

OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM

‘He neither shall be born
In housen nor in hall,
Nor in the place of Paradise,
But in an ox’s stall.

‘He neither shall be clothed
In purple nor in pall,
But all in fair linen,
As wear babies all.

‘He neither shall be rocked
In silver nor in gold,
But in a wooden cradle,
That rocks on the mould.

‘He neither shall be christened
In white wine nor red,
But with fair spring water,
With which we were christened.’

ANON.
Cherry Tree Carol

(lx)

The second duty



King Lear in his madness speaks to the fool during the raging storm

Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.
In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

SHAKESPEARE

King Lear



The poet speaks of the wheel of religious hypocrisy

I stood among my valleys of the South,
And saw a flame of fire, even as a wheel
Of fire surrounding all the heavens: it went
From West to East against the current of
Creation, and devoured all things in its loud
Fury and thundering course round heaven and earth.
By it the sun was rolled into an orb;
By it the moon faded into a globe
Travelling through the night; for, from its dire
And restless fury Man himself shrunk up
Into a little root a fathom long,
And I asked a watcher and holy-one
Its name. He answered: 'It is the wheel of religion.'
I wept and said: 'Is this the law of Jesus,—
This terrible devouring sword turning every way?'
He answered: 'Jesus died because He strove
Against the current of this wheel: its name
Is Caiaphas, the dark preacher of Death,
Of Sin, of sorrow, and of punishment;
Opposing nature: it is natural religion.
But Jesus is the bright preacher of Life.
Creating nature from this fiery law,
By self-denial and forgiveness of sin.
Go therefore, cast out devils in Christ's name,
Heal thou the sick of spiritual disease,

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF

Pity the evil: for thou art not sent
To smite with terror and with punishments
Those that are sick, like to the Pharisees
Crucifying and encompassing sea and land
For proselytes to tyranny and wrath.
But to the publicans and harlots go:
Teach them true happiness, but let no curse
Go forth out of thy mouth to blight their peace:
For Hell is opened to Heaven: thine eyes behold
The dungeons burst, and the prisoners set free.'

England! awake! awake! awake!
Jerusalem thy sister calls!
Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death,
And close her from thy ancient walls?

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet
Gently upon their bosoms move:
Thy gates beheld sweet Zion's ways;
Then was a time of joy and love.

And now the time returns again:
Our souls exult: and London's towers
Receive the Lamb of God to dwell
In England's green and pleasant bowers.

WILLIAM BLAKE
Jerusalem

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

(lxii)

The agelong heresy

For the Church clothes her stones in gold, and
leaves her sons naked.

Attributed to St. Bernard

(lxii)

And who is my neighbour?

Far far from gusty waves, these children's faces,
Like rootless weeds the torn hair round their paleness.
The tall girl with her weighed-down head. The paper-
seeming boy with rat's eyes. The stunted unlucky heir
Of twisted bones, reciting a father's gnarled disease,
His lesson from his desk. At back of the dim class,
One unnoted, sweet and young: his eyes live in a dream
Of squirrels' game, in tree room, other than this.

On sour cream walls, donations. Shakespeare's head
Cloudless at dawn, civilized dome riding all cities.
Belled, flowery Tyrolese valley. Open-handed map
Awarding the world its world. And yet, for these
Children, these windows, not this world, are world
Where all their future's painted with a fog,
A narrow street sealed in with a lead sky,
Far, far, from rivers, capes, and stars of words.

THE CHOICE OF LIFE

Surely Shakespeare is wicked, the map a bad example
With ships and sun and lore tempting them to steal—
For lives that slyly turn in their cramped holes
From fog to endless night? On their slag heap, these
children
Wear skins peeped through by bones and spectacles of
steel
With mended glass, like bottle bits on stones.
All of their time and space are foggy slum
So blot their maps with slums as big as doom.

Unless, governor, teacher, inspector, visitor,
This map becomes their window and these windows
That open on their lives like crouching tombs
Break, O break open, till they break the town
And show the children to the fields and all their world
Azure on their sands, to let their tongues
Run naked into books, the white and green leaves open
The history theirs whose language is the sun.

STEPHEN SPENDER

An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum

THE ABIDING VALUES

(lxiii)

Think on these things

Be anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

ST. PAUL

Epistle to the Philippians iv, 5-8

V

The Life of the Spirit

God is spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

St. John iv, 24

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

(lxiv)

The unseen power

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

St. John iii, 1-12

(lxv)

God with us

God be in my head,
And in my understanding;

God be in mine eyes,
And in my looking;

God be in my mouth,
And in my speaking;

God be in my heart,
And in my thinking;

God be at mine end,
And at my departing.

Fifteenth-century Sarum Prayer

(lxvi)

Soul and body

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fool'd by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on
men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying
then.

SHAKESPEARE
Sonnet cxlvii

(lxvii)

Looking back*The Pope looks back with longing to his days as a monk*

Being upon a certain day overburdened with the trouble of worldly business, in which men are oftentimes enforced to do more than of very duty they are bound, I retired to a solitary place congenial to grief, where whatever it was in my affairs that was giving me discontent might plainly reveal itself: And in that place, after I had sat a long while in silence and great affliction, my very dear son Peter the Deacon joined me who since the flower of his early youth had been attached to me by close friendship and companionship in the study of the sacred books. He, when he saw me overwhelmed in heaviness and languor of heart, questioned me, saying: 'What is the matter? or what bad news have you heard? for some unusual grief plainly possesses you!' To whom I answered: 'O Peter, the grief that I daily endure is with me both old and new: old through long use and new by continual increase. And truth is that my unhappy soul, wounded with worldly business, is now calling to mind in what state it once was when I dwelt in my monastery; how then it was superior to all transitory matters, and how it would soar far above things corruptible: How it was accustomed to think only of heavenly things, and though enclosed in mortal body would yet by contem-

LOOKING BACK

plation pass beyond its fleshly bars; while as for death which is to almost all men a punishment, that did it love, and would consider as the entrance to life, and the reward of its toil. But now by reason of my pastoral charge my poor soul must engage in the business of worldly men: and after so fair a promise of rest it is defiled in the dust of earthly occupations: and when through much ministering to others it spendeth itself on outward distractions, it cannot but return impaired unto those inward and spiritual things for which it longeth. For do but look how the ship of my mind is tossed by the waves and tempest, and how I am battered in the storm. Nay, when I recollect my former life, I sigh as one who turneth back his eyes to a forsaken shore.'

POPE GREGORY THE GREAT

★ ★

The poet after his conversion looks back over his old life

Although I do not hope to turn again

Although I do not hope

Although I do not hope to turn

Wavering between the profit and the loss

In this brief transit where the dreams cross

The dreamcrossed twilight between birth and dying

(Bless me father) though I do not wish to wish these things

From the wide window towards the granite shore

The white sails still fly seaward, seaward flying

Unbroken wings

LOOKING BACK

And the lost heart stiffens and rejoices
In the lost lilac and the lost sea voices
And the weak spirit quickens to rebel
For the bent golden-rod and the lost sea smell
Quickens to recover
The cry of quail and the whirling plover
And the blind eye creates
The empty forms between the ivory gates
And smell renewes the salt savour of the sandy earth

This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

Blessed sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit
of the garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

T. S. ELIOT
Ash Wednesday

The mind's tumult—restless love

I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my sister, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, my locks with the drops of night.

My beloved put his hand by the hole of the door, and my heart was moved for him.

I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with liquid myrrh, upon the handles of the bolt.

I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone. My soul had failed me when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

The Song of Songs, Ch. V



The poet speaks of the wild agony in his spirit

I hear an army charging upon the land
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their
knees.

Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the
charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battlename:
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling
laughter.

They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long green hair:
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the
shore.

My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left me
alone?

JAMES JOYCE
Chamber Music

(lxix)

The mind's tumult—sorrow

★

‘The wind doth blow today, my love,
 And a few small drops of rain;
 I never had but one true love,
 In cold grave she was lain.

‘I’ll do as much for my true love
 As any young man may;
 I’ll sit and mourn all at her grave
 For a twelvemonth and a day.’

The twelvemonth and a day being up,
 The dead began to speak:
 ‘Oh who sits weeping on my grave,
 And will not let me sleep?’

“Tis I, my love, sits on your grave,
 And will not let you sleep;
 For I crave one kiss of your clay-cold lips,
 And that is all I seek.”

‘You crave one kiss of my clay-cold lips;
 But my breath smells earthy strong;
 If you have one kiss of my clay-cold lips,
 Your time will not be long.

RESTLESS MOURNING

”Tis down in yonder garden green,
Love, where we used to walk;
The finest flower that ere was seen
Is withered to a stalk.

‘The stalk is withered dry, my love,
So will our hearts decay;
So make yourself content, my love,
Till God calls you away.’

ANON.

The Unquiet Grave

★ ★

Alas for man’s estate! His happiness is brought to nothing by a shadow. But his misery—that is like a picture on a slate, washed clean out by a wet sponge; and that is more pitiable, by far.

AESCHYLUS
Agamemnon

(lxx)

Peace—not as the world gives

The Archbishop, Thomas Becket, preaches in the Cathedral on Christmas morning, 1170

‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.’ The fourteenth verse of the second chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Luke. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Dear children of God, my sermon this Christmas morning will be a very short one. I wish only that you should meditate in your hearts the deep meaning and mystery of our masses of Christmas Day. For whenever Mass is said, we re-enact the Passion and Death of Our Lord; and on this Christmas Day we do this in celebration of His Birth. So that at the same moment we rejoice in His coming for the salvation of men, and offer again to God His Body and Blood in sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. It was in this same night that has just passed, that a multitude of the heavenly host appeared before the shepherds at Bethlehem, saying ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will’; at this same time of all the year that we celebrate at once the Birth of Our Lord and His Passion and death upon the Cross. Beloved, as the World sees, this is to behave in a strange

fashion. For who in the World will both mourn and rejoice at once and for the same reason? For either joy will be overborne by mourning, or mourning will be cast out by joy; so it is only in these our Christian mysteries that we can rejoice and mourn at once for the same reason. Now think for a moment about the meaning of this word 'peace'. Does it seem strange to you that the angels should have announced Peace, when ceaselessly the world has been stricken with War and the fear of War? Does it seem to you that the angelic voices were mistaken, and that the promise was a disappointment and a cheat?

Reflect now, how Our Lord Himself spoke of Peace. He said to His disciples, 'My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you'. Did He mean peace as we think of it: the kingdom of England at peace with its neighbours, the barons at peace with the King, the householder counting over his peaceful gains, the swept hearth, his best wine for a friend at the table, his wife singing to the children? Those men His disciples knew no such things: they went forth to journey afar, to suffer by land and sea, to know torture, imprisonment, disappointment, to suffer death by martyrdom. What then did He mean? If you ask that, remember then that He said also, 'Not as the world gives, give I unto you'. So then, He gave to His disciples peace, but not peace as the world gives.

Consider also one thing of which you have probably never thought. Not only do we at the feast of Christmas

celebrate at once Our Lord's Birth and His Death: but on the next day we celebrate the martyrdom of His first martyr, the blessed Stephen. Is it an accident, do you think, that the day of the first martyr follows immediately the day of the Birth of Christ? By no means. Just as we rejoice and mourn at once, in the Birth and in the Passion of Our Lord; so also, in a smaller figure, we both rejoice and mourn in the death of martyrs. We mourn, for the sins of the world that has martyred them; we rejoice, that another soul is numbered among the Saints of Heaven, for the glory of God and for the salvation of men.

Beloved, we do not think of a martyr simply as a good Christian who has been killed because he is a Christian: for that would be solely to mourn. We do not think of him simply as a good Christian who has been elevated to the company of the Saints: for that would be simply to rejoice: and neither our mourning nor our rejoicing is as the world's is. A Christian martyrdom is always the design of God, for His love of men, to warn them and to lead them, to bring them back to His ways. It is never the design of man; for the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, and who no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of being a martyr. So thus as on earth the Church mourns and rejoices at once, in a fashion that the world cannot understand; so in Heaven the Saints are most high, having made themselves most low, and are seen, not as we see them, but in the light of the Godhead from which they draw their being.

I have spoken to you to-day, dear children of God, of the martyrs of the past, asking you to remember especially our martyr of Canterbury, the blessed Archbishop Elphege; because it is fitting, on Christ's birthday, to remember what is that Peace which He brought; and because, dear children, I do not think I shall ever preach to you again; and because it is possible that in a short time you may have yet another martyr, and that one perhaps not the last. I would have you keep in your hearts these words that I say, and think of them at another time. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

T. S. ELIOT

Murder in the Cathedral

(lxxi)

Peace—patience

When will you ever, Peace, wild wooddove, shy wings shut,

Your round me roaming end, and under be my boughs?
When, when, Peace, will you, Peace? I'll not play hypocrite

To own my heart: I yield you do come sometimes; but That piecemeal peace is poor peace. What pure peace allows

Alarms of wars, the daunting wars, the death of it?

PEACE—PATIENCE

O surely, reaving Peace, my Lord should leave in lieu
Some good! And so he does leave Patience exquisite,
That plumes to Peace thereafter. . . .

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Peace

(lxxii)

The single mind

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

St. Matthew vi, 24-33

(lxxiii)

Thy will be done

If it be Thy will I should be in darkness, be Thou blessed; and if it be Thy will I should be in light, be Thou again blessed. If Thou vouchsafe to comfort me, be Thou blessed; and if Thou wilt have me afflicted, be Thou ever equally blessed.

THOMAS À KEMPIS
Imitation of Christ

(lxxiv)

The hand of God—sleep

The Sun must not set upon my anger; much lesse will I let the Sun set upon the anger of God towards me, or sleep in an unrepented sin. Every night's sleep is a *Nunc dimittis*; then the Lord lets his servant depart in peace. Thy lying down is a valediction, a parting, a taking leave, (shall I say so?) a shaking hands with God; and, when thou shakest hands with God, let those hands be clean. Sleep with cleane hands, either kept cleane all day, by integrity; or washed cleane, at night, by repentance; and whensoever thou wakest, though all Job's messengers thunder about thee, and all Job's friends multiply

REST

mis-interpretations against thee, yet Job's protestation shall be thy protestation, what end soever God have in this proceeding, *It is not for any injustice in my hands*, and the other part of his protestation too, *Also my prayer is pure.*

JOHN DONNE
from a Sermon

GOD'S GRACE

(lxxv)

Thy grace is sufficient for me

I beseech Thee, O Lord, that I may find Grace in Thy sight; for Thy Grace is sufficient for me, though other things that Nature longeth for be not obtained.

Although I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, yet I will fear no evils, so long as Thy Grace is with me.

This alone and by itself is my strength; this alone giveth advice and help.

This is stronger than all enemies, and wiser than all the wise.

THOMAS À KEMPIS
Imitation of Christ

(lxxvi)

The liberty of Christ



Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

ST. PAUL
Epistle to the Galatians v



There can be therefore now no condemnation of them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be worldly minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

ST. PAUL
Epistle to the Romans viii
[144]

(lxxvii)

*The eyes of the spirit**The blind poet is invoking the divine Light*

Hail holy light, offspring of heav'n first-born,
 Or of th' eternal co-eternal beam
 May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproached light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increase.
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
 Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing . . .

 . . . thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,

THE EYES OF THE SPIRIT

Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equal'd with me in fate
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,
And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old.
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note: thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

MILTON
Paradise Lost, Book III

(lxxviii)

Imagination and reality

Whoever it was that searched the heavens with his telescope and could find no God, would not have found the human mind if he had searched the brain with a microscope. Yet God existed in man's apprehension long before mathematics or even, perhaps, before the vault of heaven; for the objectification of the whole mind, with its passions and motives, naturally precedes that abstraction by which the idea of a material world is drawn from the chaos of experience, an abstraction which culminates in such atomic and astronomical theories as science is now familiar with. The sense for life in things, be they small or great, is not derived from the abstract idea of their bodies but is an ancient concomitant to that idea, inseparable from it until it became abstract. The failure to find God among the stars, or even the attempt to find him there, does not indicate that human experience affords no avenue to the idea of God—for history proves the contrary—but indicates rather the atrophy in this particular man of the imaginative faculty by which his race had attained to that idea. Such an atrophy might indeed become general, and God would in that case disappear from human experience as music would disappear if universal deafness attacked the race. Such an event is made conceivable by the loss of allied imaginative habits, which is observable in historic times. Yet

possible variations in human faculty do not involve the illegitimacy of such faculties as actually subsist; and the abstract world known to science, unless it dries up the ancient fountains of poetry by its habitual presence in thought, does not remove those parallel dramatizations or abstractions which experience may have suggested to men.

GEORGE SANTAYANA

(lxxix)

The end of reason

Dim as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars
 To lonely, weary, wand'ring travellers,
 Is Reason to the soul; and, as on high
 Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
 Not light us here, so Reason's glimmering ray
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
 But guide us upward to a better day.
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
 So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
 So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.

JOHN DRYDEN
Religio Laici

Religion—reason and imagination

What overcame the world, because it was what the world desired, was not a moral reform—for that was preached by every sect; not an ascetic regimen—for that was practised by heathen gymnosophists and pagan philosophers; not brotherly love within the church—for the Jews had and have that at least in equal measure; but what overcame the world was what Saint Paul said he would always preach: Christ and him crucified. Therein was a new poetry, a new ideal, a new God. Therein was the transcript of the real experience of humanity, as men found it in their inmost souls and as they were dimly aware of it in universal history. The moving power was a fable—for who stopped to question whether its elements were historical, if only its meaning were profound and its inspiration contagious? This fable had points of attachment to real life in a visible brotherhood and in an extant worship, as well as in the religious past of a whole people. At the same time it carried the imagination into a new sphere; it sanctified the poverty and sorrow at which paganism had shuddered; it awakened tenderer emotions, revealed more humane objects of adoration, and furnished subtler instruments of grace. It was a whole world of poetry descended among men, like the angels at the Nativity, doubling, as it were, their habi-

tation, so that they might move through supernatural realms in the spirit while they walked the earth in the flesh. The consciousness of new loves, new duties, fresh consolations, and luminous, unutterable hopes accompanied them wherever they went. They stopped willingly in the midst of their business for recollection, like men in love; they sought to stimulate their imaginations, to focus, as it were, the long vistas of an invisible landscape.

A crude and superficial theology may confuse God with the thunder, the mountains, the heavenly bodies, or the whole universe; but when we pass from these easy identifications to a religion that has taken root in the hearts of men, we find its objects and its dogmas purely ideal, transparent expressions of moral experience and perfect counterparts of human needs. The evidence of history or of the senses is left far behind and never thought of; the evidence of the heart, the value of the idea, are alone regarded.

Religion, then, offers another world, almost as vast and solid as the real one, in which the soul may develop. In entering it we do not enter a sphere of arbitrary dreams, but a sphere of law where learning, experience, and happiness may be gained. There is more method, more reason, in such madness than in the sanity of most people. Hence the believer in any adequate and mature religion clings to it with such strange tenacity and regards it as his highest heritage, while the outsider, whose imagination speaks another language, or is dumb alto-

IMAGINATION AND LIFE

gether, wonders how so wild a fiction can take root in a reasonable mind.

GEORGE SANTAYANA

* *

The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them, and whether they did not think at the time that they would be misunderstood, and so be the cause of imposition.

Isaiah answered: 'I saw no God nor heard any, in a finite organical perception: but my senses discovered the infinite in everything; and as I was then persuaded, and remain confirmed, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.'

Then I asked: 'Does a firm persuasion that a thing is so, make it so?'

He replied: 'All poets believe that it does, and in ages of imagination this firm persuasion removed mountains; but many are not capable of a firm persuasion of anything.'

WILLIAM BLAKE
A Memorable Fancy

* * *

I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the divine arts of imagination,—imagination, the real and

eternal world of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our eternal or imaginative bodies when these vegetable, mortal bodies are no more. The Apostles knew of no other Gospel. What were all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost any other than an intellectual fountain? What is the harvest of the Gospel, and its labours? What are the treasures of Heaven which we are to lay up for ourselves? Are they any other than mental studies and performances? What are all the gifts of the Gospel? Are they not all mental gifts? Is God a spirit who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth? And are not the gifts of the Spirit everything to man? O ye religious, discountenance every one among you who shall pretend to despise art and science. I call upon you in the name of Jesus! What is the life of man but art and science? Is it meat and drink? Is not the body more than raiment? What is mortality but the things relating to the body which dies? What is immortality but the things relating to the spirit which lives eternally? What is the joy of Heaven but improvement in the things of the spirit? What are the pains of Hell but ignorance, idleness, bodily lust, and the devastation of the things of the spirit? Answer this for yourselves, and expel from among you those who pretend to despise the labours of art and science which alone are the labours of the Gospel.

WILLIAM BLAKE

Jerusalem

Death and Extinction

Wilt thou forgive that sin, where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

Wilt thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thyself, that at my death thy Son
Shall shine, as he shines now and heretofore:
And, having done that, thou hast done:
I fear no more.

JOHN DONNE
Hymn to God the Father

(lxxxii)

Despair

★

And Job spake and said: Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it: let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months. Lo let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein. Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning. Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but have none, neither let it see the dawning of the day.

Job iii, 1-9



Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
Not untwist—slack they may be—these last strands of
man

In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more*. I can;
Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to
be.

But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldest thou rude on
me

Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb
against me? scan

With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones? and
fan,

O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to
avoid thee and flee?

Why? That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer
and clear.

Nay in all that toil, that coil, since (seems) I kissed the rod,
Hand rather, my heart lo! lapped strength, stole joy,
would laugh, cheer.

Cheer whom though? the hero whose heaven-handling
flung me, foot trod

Me? or me that fought him? O which one? is it each one?
That night, that year

Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my
God!) my God.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
Carrion Comfort

(lxxxiii)

As we forgive them

Good Lord, give me the grace, in all my fear and agony, to have recourse to that great fear and wonderful agony that Thou, my sweet Saviour, hadst at the Mount of Olivet before Thy most bitter passion, and in the meditation thereof, to conceive ghostly comfort and consolation profitable for my soul. . . .

Almighty God, have mercy on N. and N., and on all that bear me evil will, and would me harm, and their faults and mine together, by such easy, tender, merciful means, as Thine infinite wisdom best can devise, vouchsafe to amend and redress, and make us saved souls in heaven together where we may ever live and love together with Thee and Thy blessed saints. O glorious Trinity, for the bitter passion of our sweet Saviour Christ. Amen.

Lord, give me patience in tribulation and grace in everything to conform my will to Thine; that I may truly say: '*Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in celo et in terra.*'

The things, good Lord, that I pray for, give me Thy grace to labour for. Amen.

Sir Thomas More and his daughter Margaret Roper; in the week before his execution

(lxxxiv)

The supremacy of love

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part;
but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but
the greatest of these is love.

ST. PAUL

First Epistle to the Corinthians xiii

VI

Praise

*Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary.
Praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise
him for his mighty acts. Praise him according
to his excellent greatness.*

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Psalm cl

PRAISE

(lxxxv)

My God and King

Let all the world in every corner sing,
 My God and King!

The heavens are not too high
His praise may thither fly;
The earth is not too low
His praises there may grow.

Let all the World in every corner sing
 My God and King!

Let all the world in every corner sing
 My God and King!

The church with psalms must shout,
No door can keep them out;
But, above all, the heart
Must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing
 My God and King!

GEORGE HERBERT

(lxxxvi)

Solemn jubily

... to our high-rais'd phantasie present,
 That undisturbèd Song of pure content,
 Ay sung before the saphire-colour'd throne
 To him that sits theron
 With Saintly shout, and solemn Jubily,
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
 Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow,
 And the Cherubick host in thousand quires
 Touch their immortal Harps of golden wires,
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious Palms,
 Hymns devout and holy Psalms
 Singing everlastingly. . . .

JOHN MILTON
At a Solemn Music

(lxxxvii)

The king of glory

Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
 And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
 And the King of glory shall come in.
 Who is this King of glory?

The Lord strong and mighty,
 The Lord mighty in battle.

THE KING OF GLORY

Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory.

Psalm xxiv

(lxxxviii)

The praises of heaven

★

After these things, I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, a voice as of a trumpet, speaking with me, one saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter.

Straightway I was in the Spirit: and behold there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardine; and there was a rainbow round about the throne like an emerald to look upon. And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the thrones proceed lightnings and voices and thunders.

And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne, as it were a glassy sea like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.

And the four living creatures, having each one of them

THRICE HOLY

six wings, are full of eyes round about and within, and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God the Almighty, which was, and which is and which is to come. And when the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fell down before him that sitteth on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their cross before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.

Revelation iv

★ ★

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language; their voice cannot be heard.

Yet their declaration is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Psalm xix

One day telleth another

The spacious firmament on high,
 With all the blue ethereal sky,
 And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
 Their great Original proclaim.

Th' unwearied Sun from day to day
 Does his Creator's power display;
 And publishes to every land
 The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
 The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
 And nightly to the listening Earth
 Repeats the story of her birth:
 Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
 And all the planets in their turn,
 Confirm the tidings as they roll,
 And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
 Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
 What though nor real voice nor sound
 Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
 In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
 And utter forth a glorious voice;
 For ever singing as they shine,
 'The Hand that made us is divine'.

JOSEPH ADDISON

The praises of earth

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and
plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
Pied Beauty

(xci)

Praise for the day of rest

Bright shadows of true rest! Some shoots of bliss,
Heav'n once a week;

The next world's gladness prepossess'd in this;
A day to seek

Eternity in time; the steps by which
We climb above all ages; lamps that light
Man through his heap of dark days; and the rich,
And full redemption of the whole week's flight.

The pulleys unto headlong man; time's bower;
The narrow way;

Transplanted Paradise; God's walking hour;
The cool o' th' day;

The creature's Jubilee; God's parle with dust;
Heaven here; Man on those hills of myrrh, and flowers;
Angels descending; the returns of trust;
A gleam of glory, after six days' showers.

The Church's love-feasts; Time's prerogative,
And interest

Deducted from the whole; the combs, and hive,
And home of rest.

PRAISE FOR THE DAY OF REST

The Milky Way chalk'd out with suns; a clue
That guides through erring hours; and in full story
A taste of Heav'n on earth; the pledge, and cue
Of a full feast; and the outcourts of glory.

HENRY VAUGHAN

Sundays

(xcii)

Thanksgiving

O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

Behold, God is my Salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Isaiah xii

The canticle of the sun

As the time of his death (A.D. 1226) drew nigh, the Blessed Francis caused himself to be stripped of all his clothing, and to be laid upon the ground, that he might die in the arms of the Lady Poverty. This done they laid him again on his bed, and as he desired they sang to him once more the Canticle of the Sun,

O most high, Almighty Good Lord God, to thee belong praise, glory, honour, and all blessing.

Praised be my Lord for all His creatures; and especially for our brother the Sun, who brings us the day, and brings us the light; fair is he and shining with a very great splendour; O Lord, he signifies to us Thee.

Praised be my Lord for our sister Moon, and for the stars, the which He has set clear, and lovely in heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the Wind, and for air, and cloud, and all weather: by the which Thou upholdest life in all creatures. Praised be my Lord for our sister Water, and our brother fire.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the Earth, the which doth sustain us, and keep us; and bringeth forth fruits, and flowers of many colours, and grass.

Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for His Love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation: blessed are they who peaceably shall

PRAISE

endure, for Thou, O Most Exalted, shalt give them a crown.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the death of the Body, from whom no man escapeth. . . . Praise ye, and bless the Lord; and give thanks to Him with great humility.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

VII

The Gate of Life

The face of death is towards the sun of life.

Tennyson

THE GATE OF LIFE

(xciv)

Now we see through a glass darkly

I would know whether after the parting of the body
and the soul I shall ever know more than I now know
of all that which I have long wished to know; for I can-
not find anything better in man than that he know, and
nothing worse than that he be ignorant.

KING ALFRED THE GREAT

(xcv)

The gate of gold

The door of death is made of gold
Which mortal eyes cannot behold;
But when the mortal eyes are closed
And cold and pale the limbs reposed,
The soul awakes, and, wondering, sees
In her mild hand the golden keys.
—The grave is Heaven's golden gate
And rich and poor around it wait.

WILLIAM BLAKE
Dedication to Blair's Grave

My end is my beginning

Socrates has been condemned to death and is about to drink the poison cup

When he had spoken these words, he arose and told us to wait while he went into the bath-chamber with Crito; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath his children were brought to him (he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the eleven, entered and stood by him, saying: To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me, when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will

not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us, he said, How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared; if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hill-tops, and I know that many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and enjoyed the society of his beloved; do not hasten then, there is still time.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think that they will gain by the delay; but I am right in not doing thus, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone, and could only despise myself for this. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by; and he went out, and having been absent for some time, returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experi-

enced in these matters shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of colour or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said: but I may and must ask the gods to prosper my journey from this to that other world—even so—and so be it according to my prayer. Then holding the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept over myself, for certainly I was not weeping over him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having lost such a friend. Nor was I the first, for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears, had got up and moved away, and I followed; and at that moment Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out in a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might

not offend in this way, for I have heard that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience. When we heard that, we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard, and asked him if he could feel; and he said, No; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said (they were his last words)—he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt?

The debt shall be paid, said Crito; is there anything else? There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all the men whom I have ever known.

PLATO
Phaedo



Death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now. . . .
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies . . .
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train
Home to his father's house: there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts,
To matchless valour and adventure high. . . .

MILTON
Samson Agonistes

The summons of Mr. Ready-to-halt

In process of time, there came a post to the town again, and his business was with Mr. Ready-to-halt.

So he inquired him out, and said, I am come to thee in the name of Him whom thou hast loved and followed, though upon crutches; and my message is, to tell thee, that he expects thee at his table, to sup with him, in his kingdom, the next day after Easter: wherefore prepare thyself for thy journey.

Then he also gave him a token that he was a true messenger, saying, I have 'broken the golden bowl, and loosed the silver cord'.

After this, Mr. Ready-to-halt called for his fellow-pilgrims, and told them, saying, I am sent for, and God shall surely visit you also.

So he desired Mr. Valiant to make his will; and because he had nothing to bequeath to them that should survive him, but his crutches and his good wishes, therefore thus he said: These crutches I bequeath to my son that shall tread in my steps, with an hundred warm wishes that he may prove better than I have been.

Then he thanked Mr. Great-heart for his conduct and kindness, and so addressed himself to his journey.

When he came to the brink of the river, he said, Now I shall have no more need of these crutches, since yonder are chariots and horses for me to ride on.

The last words he was heard to say, were Welcome life! So he went his way.

JOHN BUNYAN
Pilgrim's Progress

(xcviii)

The summons of Mr. Valiant-for-truth

After this it was noised about, that Mr. Valiant-for-truth was taken with a summons by the same post as the other; and had this for a token that the summons was true, that 'His pitcher was broken at the fountain'.

When he understood it, he called of his friends, and told them of it. Then said he, I am going to my Father's; and though with great difficulty I have got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am.

My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought his battles, who will now be my rewarder.

When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river-side, into which as he went, he said, Death, where is thy sting? and as he went down deeper, Grave where is thy victory? So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

JOHN BUNYAN
Pilgrim's Progress

There was darkness

And they crucify him, and part his garments among them, casting lots upon them, which each should take. And it was about the third hour, and they crucified him. And the superscription of his accusation was written over:

THE KING OF THE JEWS

And with him they crucify two robbers, one on his right hand, and one on his left. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross! In like manner also the chief priests mocking him among themselves with the scribes said, He saved others; himself he cannot save! Let the Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reproached him.

And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land till the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah. And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar put it upon a reed, and gave him to drink, say-

ing, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down. And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion which stood over against him saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

St. Mark xv, 24-39

(c)

The valley of the shadow of death

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely thy goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm xxiii

(ci)

Meditation on the Passion

Jhesu, that hast me dear i-bought,
Write thou ghostly in my thought,
That I may with devotion
Think upon thy dear passion.

For, though mine heart be hard as stone,
Yet mayst thou ghostly write thereon
With nails and with spear keen,
So shall the letters be well seen.

Write in mine heart, with speeches sweet,
When Judas, the traitor, did thee meet;
That traitor was full of the fend
And yet thou callest him thy friend!

Sweet Jhesu, how might thou so
Callen thy friend so fell a foe?
But sithen thou spake so lovely
To him that was thine enemy,

How sweet shall all thy speeches be
To them that heartily love thee,
When they in heaven with thee shall dwell
Iwis there may no tongue that tell.

Write how thou were bounden sore,
And drawen forth Pilate before,
And how sweetly thou answered tho
To him that there was thy fell foe.

Write how that false enquest
Cried ever withouten rest:
'Hang him up on the rood tree
For he will King of Jewes be.'

Write upon mine hearte-book
Thy fair, and sweet lovely look,
For shame of their hideous cry
That would of thee have no mercy.

* * *

Jhesu, write thus, that I may know
How muckle love to thee I owe,
For though that I will fro thee flee
Thou followest ay to save me.

Jhesu, when I think on thee,
How thou were bound for love of me,
Well ought I to weep that stound
That thou for me so sore were bound;

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION

But thou that bare upon thy honds
For my sin so bitter bonds,
With love bonds bind thou so me
That I be ne'er parted fro thee.

Jhesu, that were with love so bound,
That sufferd for me the death wound,
At my dying so visit me
And make the fend away to flee.

Jhesu, make me glad to be
Simple and poor, for love of thee,
And let me never, for more nor less
Love goods too muckle, that soon shall pass.

* * *

Jhesu, I pray thee forsake not me
Though I of sin guilty be,
For to that thief that hung thee by
Readily thou gave him thy mercy.

Jhesu, that so great curtesy
Maketh me hold on thee to cry,
For well I wot withouten dread,
Thy mercy is more than my misdeed.

Jhesu that art so lef and dear,
Hear and speed this poor prayere;

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION

For Paul, that was so fell and wood
To spill cristen mennis blood,
To thee would he no prayere make
And yet thou wouldest not him forsake.

Then mayst thou not forsake me
Sithen that I pray thus to thee,
At my dying I hope iwis
Of thy presence shall I not miss.

Jhesu make me then to arise
From death to life, on such a wise
As thou rose up on easter day
In joy and bliss to liven ay.

ANON: FIFTEENTH CENTURY BALLAD
printed in Comper and Grierson, Spiritual Songs

My redeemer liveth

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth; and after my skin hath been then destroyed, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

Job xix, 25-27

The real world

They are all gone into the world of light!

And I alone sit ling'ring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dress'd,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days:
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O Father of Eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective (still) as they pass,
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

HENRY VAUGHAN

(ciii)

The burning heart

Two disciples, on the road to Emmaus, meet the risen Lord

And they drew nigh unto the village where they were going, and he made as though he would go further. And they constrained him, saying: Abide with us, for it is towards evening and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them. And it came to pass, when he had sat down with them to meat, he took the bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?

St. Luke xxiv, 28-32

Epilogue

For the absolute good is the cause and source of all beauty, just as the Sun is the source of all daylight, and it cannot therefore be spoken or written; yet we speak and write of it, in order to start and escort ourselves on the way, and arouse our minds to the vision; like as when one sheweth a pilgrim on his way to some shrine that he would visit; for the teaching is only of whither and how to go, the vision itself is the work of him who hath willed to see.

PLOTINUS
translated by Robert Bridges

Acknowledgments

The editor wishes to thank many colleagues who have helped him, and Miss Brenda Horrex who saw the book through the press; he wishes to thank also those who have given permission for poems and extracts to be included in this book: Lord Balfour, and Messrs. Longmans Green and Company, for an extract from *The Foundations of Belief*, by the late Lord Balfour; Messrs. John Lane the Bodley Head Ltd. for an extract from *Heretics* by the late G. K. Chesterton; Mr. T. S. Eliot for extracts from *Ash Wednesday* and *Murder in the Cathedral*; Lord Esher and Messrs. Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd. for an extract from *The Journals and Letters of Reginald, Viscount Esher*; the representatives of the late Gerard Manley Hopkins, and the Oxford University Press, for extracts from the Poems of G. M. Hopkins; the Syndics of the University Press, Cambridge, for extracts from *The Stars in their Courses* and *The Mysterious Universe* by Sir James Jeans, and for an extract from *Adventures of Ideas* by the late Professor A. N. Whitehead; the Trustees of the James Joyce Estate, and Messrs. Jonathan Cape Ltd., for poem No. XXXVI from *Chamber Music* by the late James Joyce; Messrs. Constable & Company Ltd. for two extracts from *Little Essays* by the late Professor George Santayana; Miss Dorothy Sayers and Messrs. Methuen and Company Ltd., for an extract from *The*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mind of the Maker; Mr. Stephen Spender for the poem, *An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum*; Colonel Bernard Fergusson for a passage from *Beyond the Chindwin*; the Clarendon Press, Oxford, and the Hon. R. H. Hodgkin, for translations from Alfred in *A History of the Anglo-Saxons*; and Dr. Einstein and Professor H. A. Hodges for the privilege of quoting from them also.

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